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THE

NILE BOAT

OR

GLIMPSES OF THE

LAND OF EGYPT.

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THE NILE BOAT;

GLIMPSES OF THE

LAND OF EGYPT.

BY W. H. BARTLETT,

AUTHOR OF

'FORTY DAYS IN THE DESERT.'

Second Edition.

LONDON:

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PREFACE.

To add another book on Egypt to the number that have already appeared, may almost appear like a piece of presumption. But it should be remarked, that besides the army of erudite 'savans' who have enlisted themselves in the study of its antiquities, there has always been a flying corps of light-armed skirmishers, who, going lightly over the ground, busy themselves chiefly with its picturesque aspect; who aim at giving lively impressions of actual sights, and at thus creating an interest which may lead the reader to a further investigation of the subject. This class of writers can, of course, even when successful in their object, claim but a very humble rank. The modicum of historical and archæological lore with which they are accustomed to season their narratives must, naturally, be borrowed from others; all the merit that falls to them being the faithful description of what they have themselves beheld. Of such slight texture is the composition of the present volume. The author had, indeed, entirely renounced the idea of preparing one, and was only encouraged to do so by the kind reception of a recent production of the same stamp, which aimed at producing distinctness of impressions by the combination of the pencil and the pen.

While disclaiming for the text of his book any pretensions to originality, the writer is anxious to say that this is not the case with the illustrations, of which the whole were drawn upon the spot, many of them with the Camera Lucida. He has endeavoured to present, within small compass, as much variety as possible, displaying the principal monuments of the earlier or Pharaonic monuments, as at Thebes; the later Ptolemaic style, as at Edfou and Philæ; with some of the most beautiful specimens of the Arabian, at Cairo. The sites of Alexandria and Thebes, with their principal ruins, are, it is hoped,

rendered distinct and intelligible. Something, too, is attempted of the characteristic scenery of the river, and something of modern manners and customs. The figures were all put in from actual sketches, often exactly as they stand. In short, the book, though far from giving an *adequate* idea of Egyptian scenery and monuments, which is indeed impossible on the scale, so far as it goes, may claim to be a correct one, at least in intention and endeavour.

The authorities quoted are generally named, but the author cannot omit to acknowledge his especial obligations to the kindness of Mr. Samuel Sharpe, the historian of Egypt. The interest taken by that gentleman in every attempt to popularise the favourite subject of his studies, has led him, not only to present the writer with a brief introduction, but also to allow the literal quotation of such portions of his volume as happened to bear upon the subject described, giving thereby a permanent utility and value to what would otherwise be trivial and fugitive. Thus, the entire historical sketch of Thebes, prefixed to the account of its ruins, is extracted in full from his valuable "History of Egypt."

Finally, should any one, by glancing over these pages, be tempted to think of visiting the country they describe, let him not suppose it is intended to usurp the functions of a guide book, beyond pointing out the prominent objects of interest. For the manners and customs of Ancient Egypt, and a detailed description of the existing monuments, the works of Sir Gardner Wilkinson are indispensable; as are those of Lane for the modern state of Egypt. These are not the hasty sketches of a passing tourist, but the result of years of patient and learned investigation; and no one should think of going to Egypt without them; nor, we must say in addition, without the history already referred to. More compact and portable editions than the present of these invaluable volumes would, however, be a boon to the traveller, by whom, more than any one else, "a great book" is felt to be "a great evil."

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HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION.

BY

SAMUEL SHARPE, ESQ.

THE Egyptians are the earliest people known to us as a nation. When Abraham entered the Delta from Canaan, they had already been long enjoying all the advantages of a settled government and established laws. While Abraham and his countrymen were moving about in tents and waggons, the Egyptians were living in cities. They had already cultivated agriculture, and parcelled out their valley into farms: they reverenced a landmark as a god, while their neighbours knew of no property but herds and moveables. They had invented hieroglyphics, and improved them into syllabic writing, and almost into an alphabet. They had invented records, and wrote their kings' names and actions on the massive temples which they raised. Of course we have no means of counting the ages during which civilization was slowly making these steps of improvement. Overlooking, therefore, those years when the gods were said to have reigned upon earth, and Menes the fabulous founder of the monarchy, history begins with the earliest remaining records. These are, the

temple at Karnak, and the obelisk at Heliopolis, both raised by Osirtesen I. of Thebes, and the great pyramids built by Suphis and Sensuphis, kings of Memphis, with the tablets in the copper mines near Sinai, which record the conquest of that country by Suphis, and prove that those mines had been already worked by the Egyptians. Such was the state of Egypt in the time of Abraham. It was divided into several little kingdoms, whose boundaries cannot now be exactly known. In the valley to the south of Silsilis was the kingdom of Elephantine. Next was the kingdom of Thebes, which perhaps included all the valley to the east of the river. It had a port at Ænum on the Red Sea, and thus traded with Arabia. Next was the kingdom of This, or Abydos, on the west of the river, which had a little trade with the Great Oasis; and then the kingdom of Heracleopolis also on the western bank. Next was the kingdom of Memphis, embracing the western half of the Delta, which in the reign of Suphis had been strong enough to conquer Thebes and the peninsula of Sinai. In the east of the Delta were the kingdoms of Bubastis and Tanis.

It was in the time of these little monarchies that the Chaldeans and Phenician herdsmen were moving westward, and settling quietly in the Delta. But after a few generations, as their numbers increased, they took possession of some of the cities, and levied a tribute from the Egyptians. Their sovereigns were called the Hyksos, or Shepherd kings, who dwelt at Abaris, probably the city afterwards called Heliopolis, and they held their ground in

Egypt for about six reigns. The tyranny, however, of the Hyksos at length led the states of Egypt to unite against them; and Amasis, king of Thebes, making common cause with the kings of the other parts of Egypt, defeated these hateful but warlike Phenicians, and drove them out of the country. This may have taken place about fourteen hundred and fifty years before our era, and about two hundred years after the reign of Osirtesen I.

With Amasis and the expulsion of the Shepherds began the reigns of those great Theban kings, whose temples, and statues, and obelisks, and tombs, have for more than three thousand years made the valley of the Nile a place of such interest to travellers. The kings of the other parts of Egypt sunk to the rank of sovereign priests. Amunothph I. gained Ethiopia by marriage. Thothmosis II., by his marriage with Queen Nitocris, the builder of the third pyramid, added Memphis to his dominions. Thothmosis IV. perhaps carved the great sphinx. Amunothph III. set up his two gigantic statues in the plain of Thebes, one of which uttered its musical notes every morning at sunrise. Oimenepthah I. added to the temples of Thebes and of Abydos. Rameses II. covered Egypt, and Ethiopia, and the coasts of the Red Sea, with his temples, and obelisks, and statues. He fought successfully against the neighbouring Arabs, and marched through Palestine to the shores of the Black Sea. Rameses III. still further ornamented Thebes with his architecture.

It was at the beginning of this period, before Memphis was united to Thebes, that the Israelites settled in the

Delta, and Joseph, as prime minister of the king of Memphis, changed the laws of Lower Egypt. And it was after Thebes and Memphis were united, when Joseph's services had been forgotten, that Moses led his countrymen out of Egypt to escape the tyranny of their masters. The Egyptian religion at this time was the worship of a crowd of gods, of which some were stone statues, and others living animals; and it was against these and other Egyptian superstitions that many of the laws of Moses are pointedly directed.

The tombs of these kings are large rooms quarried into the Libyan hills opposite to Thebes, with walls covered with paintings still fresh, and with hieroglyphics which we are attempting to read. The columns which upheld their temples are the models from which the Greeks afterwards copied. Their statues, though not graceful, are grand and simple, free from false ornament, and often colossal. Their wealth was proverbial with the neighbouring nations; and the remaining monuments of their magnificence prove that Egypt was at this time a highly civilized country, to which its neighbours looked up with wonder. The Jewish nation was weak and struggling with difficulties before the reign of David; the history of Greece begins with the Trojan war; but before the time of David and the Trojan war, the power and glory of Thebes had already passed away. Upper Egypt sunk under the rising power of the Delta. Theban prosperity had lasted for about five hundred years.

B. C. 990.

On the fall of Thebes, Shishank of Bubastis, the conqueror of Rehoboam, governed all Egypt, and recorded on the walls of the great Theban temple his victories over the Jews. But after his death Egypt was torn to pieces by civil wars. Zerah, king of Ethiopia, was able to march through the whole length of the land. For a few reigns the kingdom was governed by kings of Tanis. Then the kings of Ethiopia reigned in Thebes, and led the armies of Egypt to help the Israelites against their Assyrian masters. This unsettled state of affairs lasted nearly three hundred years, during which, as the prophet Isaiah had foretold, Egyptians fought against Egyptians, every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour, city against city, and kingdom against kingdom. It was put an end to by the city of Sais rising to the mastery, helped by the number of Greeks that had settled there, and by the greater skill in arms of the Greek mercenaries whom the kings of Sais took into their pay.

Under the kings of Sais Egypt again enjoyed a high degree of prosperity. They were more despotic than the kings of Thebes. They hired Greek mercenaries, and struggled with the Babylonians for the dominion of Judea. Psammetichus conquered Ethiopia. Necho began the canal from the Nile to the Red Sea. His sailors circumnavigated Africa. He conquered Jerusalem; and when the Chaldees afterwards drove back the Egyptian army, the remnant of Judah, with the prophet Jeremiah, retreated

into Egypt to seek a refuge with king Hophra. The colony of Greeks at Naucratis, a little below Sais, now became more important. The Greek philosophers, Thales and Solon, visited the country, brought there by trade and the wish for knowledge. Hecatæus of Miletus went up as high as Thebes, and Pythagoras dwelt many years among the priests. But Egyptian greatness now rested on a weak foundation. Jealousy increased between the native soldiers and the more favoured Greek mercenaries. The armies in Asia met with a more powerful enemy than formerly. Nebuchadnezzar defeated them on the banks of the Euphrates. Cyrus reconquered the island of Cyprus; and lastly, Cambyses overran Egypt, and reduced it to the rank of a Persian province.

B. C. 523.

For two hundred years Egypt suffered severely under its Persian rulers, or else from its own struggles for freedom, when the Persian armies were called off by warfare in another quarter. Cambyses plundered the tombs and temples, broke the statues, and scourged the priests. Darius governed more mildly by native satraps; but after his defeat at Marathon, the Egyptians rose and made themselves independent for two or three years. Afterwards, when Bactria rebelled against Artaxerxes, they again rose and made Inarus and Amyrtæus kings. Then for a few years Hellanicus, and Herodotus, and other inquiring Greeks, were able to enter the Nile, and study the customs of this remarkable people. When the Egyptians were

again conquered, Darius Nothus attempted to alter the religion of the country. But when the civil war broke out between Artaxerxes Mnemon and the younger Cyrus, the Egyptians rebelled a third time against the Persians, and with the help of the Greeks were again an independent monarchy. Plato and Eudoxus then visited the country. The fourth conquest by the Persians was the last, and Egypt was governed by a Persian satrap, till by the union among the Greek states, their mercenaries were withdrawn from the barbarian armies, and Persia was conquered by Alexander the Great.

B. C. 332.

The Greeks had before settled in Lower Egypt in such numbers, that as soon as Alexander's army occupied Memphis, they found themselves the ruling class. Egypt became in a moment a Greek kingdom; and Alexander showed his wisdom in the regulations by which he guarded the prejudices and religion of the Egyptians, who were henceforth to be treated as inferiors, and forbidden to carry arms. He founded Alexandria as the Greek capital. On his death, his lieutenant Ptolemy made himself king of Egypt, and was the first of a race of monarchs who governed for three hundred years, and made it a second time the chief kingdom in the world, till it sunk under its own luxuries and vices and the rising power of Rome. The Ptolemies founded a large public library, and a museum of learned men. Under their patronage Theocritus, Callimachus, Lycophron, and Apollonius Rhodius

wrote their poems; Euclid wrote his Elements of Geometry; Apollonius of Perga invented Conic Sections; Hipparchus made a catalogue of the stars; Eratosthenes measured the size of the earth; the Bible was translated into Greek; several of the Apocryphal books were written; Homer was edited; anatomy was studied. But poetry soon sunk under the despotism, and the writers were then contented to clothe science in verse. Aratus wrote an astronomical poem; Manetho, an astrological poem; Nicander, a medical poem; and afterwards Dionysius, a geographical poem.

Under these Alexandrian kings the native Egyptians continued building their grand and massive temples nearly in the style of those built by the kings of Thebes and Sais. The temples in the island of Philæ, in the Great Oasis, at Latopolis, at Ombos, at Dendera, and at Thebes, prove that the Ptolemies had not wholly crushed the zeal and energy of the Egyptians. An Egyptian phalanx had been formed, armed and disciplined like the Greeks. These soldiers rebelled against the weakness of Epiphanes, but without success; and then Thebes rebelled against Soter II., but was so crushed and punished, that it never again held rank among cities.

But while the Alexandrians were keeping down the Egyptians, they were themselves sinking under the Romans. Epiphanes asked for Roman help; his two sons appealed to the senate to settle their quarrels and guard the kingdom from Syrian invasion; Alexander II. was placed on the throne by the Romans; and Auletes went to

Rome to ask for help against his subjects. Lastly, the beautiful Cleopatra, the disgrace of her country and the firebrand of the Republic, maintained her power by surrendering her person first to Julius Cæsar, and then to Mark Antony.

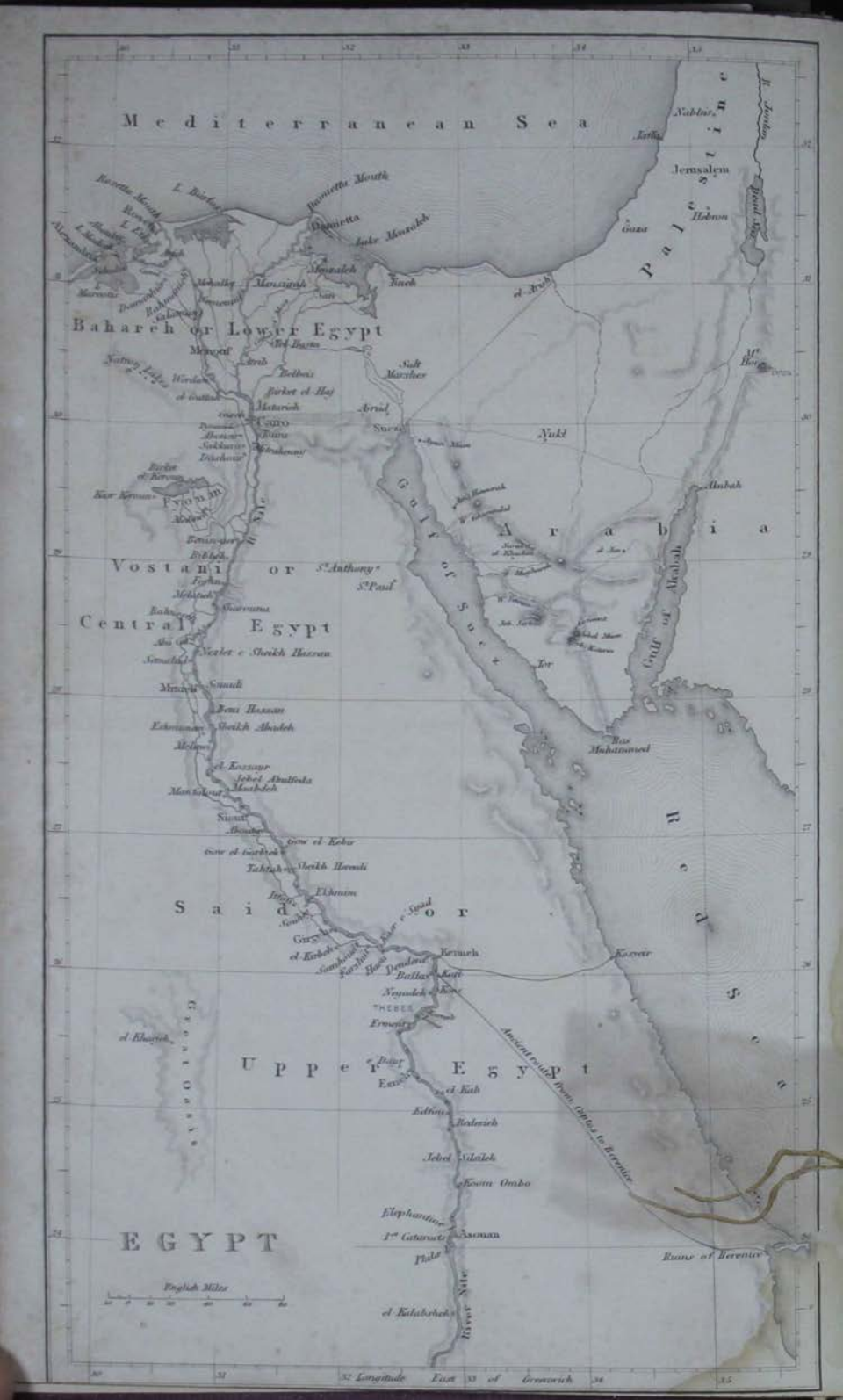
B. C. 30.

On the defeat of Mark Antony by Augustus, Egypt became a province of Rome, and was governed by the emperors with suspicious jealousy. It was still a Greek state, and Alexandria was the chief seat of Greek learning and science. Its library, which had been burnt by Cæsar's soldiers, had been replaced by that from Pergamus. The Egyptians yet continued building temples, and covering them with hieroglyphics as of old. But on the spread of Christianity, the old superstitions went out of use; the animals were no longer worshipped; and we find few hieroglyphical inscriptions after the reign of Commodus. Now rose in Alexandria the Christian Catechetical school, which produced Clemens and Origen. The sects of Gnostics united astrology and magic with religion. The school of Alexandrian Platonists produced Plotinus and Proclus. Monasteries were built all over Egypt; Christian monks took the place of the pagan hermits, and the Bible was translated into Coptic.

A. D. 337.

On the division of the Roman empire, Egypt fell to the lot of Constantinople. On the rise of the Arian con-

troversy, the Egyptians belonged to the Athanasian party, while the Greeks of Alexandria were chiefly Arians. Hence a new cause of weakness to the government. Under Theodosius, Paganism and Arianism were forbidden by law, the library was burnt by the Athanasians, and the last traces of science retreated from Alexandria before ignorance and bigotry. The country fell off every year in civilization, in population, and in strength; and when the Arabs, animated by religion, and with all the youth and vigour of a new people, burst forth upon their neighbours, Egypt was conquered by the followers of Mahomet, A. D. 640, six hundred and seventy years after it had been conquered by the Romans.


Mediterranean Sea
Palestine
Arabia
Bahareh or Lower Egypt
Vostani or Central Egypt
Said or Upper Egypt
EGYPT
Gulf of Suez
Gulf of Arabia
Red Sea
Nile
Damietta Mouth
Damietta
Lake Menzaleh
Rosetta Mouth
Rosetta
Alexandria
Lake Mareotis
Menouf
Cairo
Giza
Memphis
Pyramids
Fyoum
Lake Moeris
Abousir
Sakkara
Dashour
Meydoum
Beni Hassan
Antinoe
Siout
Girge
Tahta
Akhmim
Gau el Kebir
Sheikh Haredi
Esneh
Edfou
Redesieh
Jebel Silsileh
Kom Ombo
Elephantine
1st Cataract
Assouan
Philæ
Ruins of Berenice
Ancient route from Cosseir to Berenice
Cosseir
Kenneh
Thebes
Karnak
Luxor
Esneh
Ermenth
Dendera
Ballas
Keft
Negadeh
Kous
Gebel Abulfeda
Manfalout
Sheikh Abadeh
Eshmounein
Minieh
Samalout
Atfieh
Ezbet el Sheikh Hassan
Benisouef
Abousir
Meydoum
Sakkara
Memphis
Giza
Cairo
Boulak
Matarieh
Heliopolis
Abbasieh
Belbeis
Birket el Hadj
Salt Marshes
Suez
Nukl
Tor
Ras Mohammed
Abukh
Jerusalem
Nablus
Jaffa
Gaza
Hebron
Dead Sea
R. Jordan
Mt. Horeb
Sinai
Wadi el Arish
el Arish
Lake Menzaleh
Lake Burlos
Damietta
Rosetta
Alexandria
Natron Lakes
Wardan
Terraneh
Fyoum
Bahr Yousef
Lake Moeris
Abousir
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Dashour
Meydoum
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Esneh
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Thebes
Karnak
Luxor
Kenneh
Cosseir
Ancient route from Cosseir to Berenice
Ruins of Berenice
Red Sea
Gulf of Arabia
Gulf of Suez
Tor
Ras Mohammed
Abukh
Mt. Horeb
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Wadi el Arish
el Arish
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Jerusalem
Nablus
Jaffa
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Hebron
Palestine
Arabia
Mediterranean Sea
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Rosetta Mouth
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Bahareh or Lower Egypt
Vostani or Central Egypt
Said or Upper Egypt
EGYPT
Gulf of Suez
Gulf of Arabia
Red Sea
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Damietta
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Ras Mohammed
Abukh
Jerusalem
Nablus
Jaffa
Gaza
Hebron
Dead Sea
R. Jordan
Mt. Horeb
Sinai
Wadi el Arish
el Arish
Mediterranean Sea
Palestine
Arabia

CHAPTER I.

DEPARTURE FROM MARSEILLES.—THE INDIA MAIL.—A SHIP RUN DOWN.—A GLANCE AT MALTA.—ALEXANDRIA.—ANCIENT AND MODERN CHARACTERISTICS.—PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE CITY.—ITS TOPOGRAPHY AND HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS.

On a bright day in the month of June, 1845, I found myself safely berthed on board the government steamer, and surrounded by the busy panorama of Marseilles and its crowded harbour. The time for our departure had expired, but something had detained the courier with the India mail, and we were becoming impatient, when boats were seen rapidly pushing through the crowded shipping. In one moment they were recognised as bringing the object of our anxious expectation, in the next all hands were active in hoisting it on board, and in almost the next, the captain's "Go on" announced that we were off. Few persons at home have any idea of the mass of correspondence thus conveyed: upwards of a hundred square boxes, carefully sealed and marked "India Mail outward," were consigned to the hold as we rapidly cleared the harbour and lost sight of the city. The impression of the vast importance of our distant empire thus made, was deepened by the character of the passengers on board: officers returning after leave of absence, others going out for the first time, veterans proceeding to distant governments, heads of commercial houses and junior clerks, correspondents of newspapers and restless tourists, together with an elegant Indian prince, who, tempted by the facility of intercourse, had visited England, and was now returning, and a young widow of Bom-

bay, whose weeds looked too becoming to allow the anticipation that they would be either renewed or over-worn, made up the company, all disposed, at this distance from home, to dispense with introductions, and to amalgamate cordially into one temporary family.

The weather was at first beautiful, but on the second day became squally. We passed the rude wild mountains of Sardinia; the wind sunk, but left a heavy swell, which kept me awake to a late hour in the night: suddenly I was alarmed by a loud noise on deck, much stamping, and cries of "Back her:" evidently some disastrous event was momentarily expected; but whether we were about to run down a fishing boat, or were ourselves on the point of being crushed into the ocean depths by the keel of some monster ship of the line, was all uncertain. I leaped from my berth, and was groping across the cabin when the crash took place. It seemed trifling, as though we had but grazed another vessel, and I hastened up the gangway, quite relieved of my alarm. On the deck, however, all was confusion and clamour; but in the midst of it the men were engaged in hastily letting down a boat: it was a dusky night; our ship was rolling in the heavy sea, the wind was aft, and the smoke driven forward involved the look-out in obscurity, but I could see, although with difficulty, a brig pitching laboriously at a short distance. Shouts were heard on board her; our boat put off, and was soon lost to sight among the rolling billows: all was suspense, when the cry burst out forward, that the brig was sinking. I strained my eyes through the gloom, and beyond the swelling ridges of water that successively traced their dark outlines against the sky, distinctly saw the masts, but only for a moment; in the next they had disappeared, and almost at the same time, a boat, deeply laden, was seen emerging from between two gulfy waves, and making for us: this wild scene passed as rapidly and confusedly as a dream. The crowded boat was soon alongside, tossing dangerously in the swell: ropes were let down, and one by one the crew of the brig, of

whom happily all had been saved, were hauled up to the deck. The first that came up was a boy of only twelve or thirteen, albeit looking, in his blue woollen shirt and sailor's trousers, one of the finest little fellows I ever saw. Asleep in his rude cot, he had been hastily snatched from destruction, and stood scarcely awake, and quite confounded at his novel situation. We had struck the vessel amidships, and slight as the shock seemed to me, had completely torn open her side: the crew had barely time to throw themselves into the boat, and get clear of her, ere she filled and went down. The darkness, our blinding smoke, and the accidental going out of their lamp, which occasioned some mistake in their steering, were the causes of this misfortune, which cast its gloom over the rest of our short voyage to Malta.

The next day the swell had subsided, a gentle breeze kept us steadily before the wind, the sky had resumed its deep cerulean, and after a glorious sunset, with the freshening wind, we cut swiftly through the seething billows, sparkling with phosphoric light, while the horizon flashed with the vivid summer lightning. Indescribably beautiful are such evenings in the Mediterranean; and as you approach the island of Malta, brilliantly arise from the dark blue sea the white Moresco-looking walls and domes of its capital, Valetta, bristling with fortifications ancient and modern, backed by a sky already nearly African, warm, lustrous, and soft, and without a particle of smoke to prevent the minutest and most distant objects from being relieved with the utmost clearness. One feels sensibly approaching the golden climate of the East. A few hours in this stronghold of the ancient knights of St. John of Jerusalem, is a delightful relief to the sameness of even a brief voyage. To any one coming for the first time from Northern Europe, the whole scene is singularly foreign. The white and yellow houses of the city are piled picturesquely one above another, with their flat roofs, and large projecting green verandahs, surmounted by towers and domes of every variety of unaccustomed form,

and with little vegetation, but that little consisting of orange trees, broad-leaved bananas, and patches of brilliant scarlet geraniums. On the quays, swarms of babbling lazzaroni mingling with sturdy seamen, on the cool flat roofs, groups of ladies wrapped from head to foot in their black silk mantillas, the noble harbour studded with men of war and steamers, the crowd of white-sailed feluccas, and gaily painted and draperied boats—present altogether a spectacle as novel and peculiar as it is brilliant.

Strange and foreign looking, however, as the place appears at first, you have but to land to seem half at home. English soldiers in their familiar costume and erect disciplined bearing, and shops set out on the English model, might make you forget your distance from it; but images of saints, and shrines, and priestly processions, followed by a crowd of bare-footed lazzaroni, soon restore the original impression,—while amid the "thunder of ten thousand tuneless bells," you ascend, jostled by a throng of importunate beggars, "those cursed streets of stairs," as Byron calls them, which lead up into the principal street, and to the famous church of St. John. The twenty-four hours allowed for our brief sojourn had however expired, and from the commanding height of the terraced promenade above Valetta I cast a parting look over the splendid panorama. There was our well-appointed vessel, getting up her steam, surrounded by a crowd of others, attracted to this central point, where the different lines of steamers employed in the transmission of correspondence do meet and congregate. Far different was the scene in this respect when I last traced the same route: instead of the prompt, rapid, and almost luxurious conveyance which these afford, whatever be the port desired, I had then to wait three tedious weeks for the privilege of sailing in an old dirty Maltese brig. Fifteen days of suffering were then passed in the voyage to Egypt; the vessel was unspeakably filthy, swarming with rats, cock-roaches, and other vermin, and when after a prostration of several days by sickness

I awoke to a sense of ravening hunger, musty biscuits, Sardines, and olives, and salt fish, all too dear even at the low price of sixpence per day, were the only viands to be obtained; for in confiding ignorance of the state of the ship's stores, I had neglected to lay in any stock of provisions.

And now again we were safe on board, and gliding out of the harbour. Domes and terraces, ramparts and quays, flew by. The fort of St. Angelo with its solitary centinel, and the meteor flag of England waving from its battlements, succeeded, and then again the open sea, all sparkling and quivering with the warm reflected light. As we stretched away, the walls and towers massed into a glorious picture, bathed in that same rosy haze, now dying away, until all faded into indistinctness, and nothing met the eye but the stars sleeping in the pale azure, and the long track of phosphoric splendour, in which the glow-worms of the deep lay telling of the vagrant keel that had disturbed their slumbers. Our voyage through this summer sea was brief and prosperous. The sky grew warmer and warmer as we neared the coast of Africa, tinged, as it were, with a reflection of the Libyan desert; a soft purple hue, rather than the deep blue of Italy. On the fourth day appeared a long, low, yellow line of sand, scarcely visible above the azure sea, with a few distant palm trees, like black specks, and camels pacing slowly along the shore, announcing that we were on the threshold of those lands of which we have so often dreamed; the hope of visiting which was perhaps, at one time, too extravagant for a moment's indulgence.

Yet the first view of Alexandria, full as it is of historical reminiscences, is, in all other respects, more unimposing than that of any other city on the Mediterranean. A long line of windmills on a sandy ridge, the new light-house and palace built by the present pasha, and the tall column of Dioclesian, the only visible wreck of the ancient city—such are the few prominent objects which rise above the dead level of the sea. The entrance to the harbour is difficult, but its spacious area is

thronged with ships of war, steamers, merchantmen, and all the smaller craft incident to extended traffic. For under the government of Mehemet Ali, this city, which is his principal residence, and the scene of his most important improvements, has experienced an immense development, and is likely to regain a large proportion of its ancient consequence.

Of this Campbell, in a few graphic sentences, sets before us a striking picture.

"Alexandria was the greatest of all the cities founded by a conqueror who built even more than he destroyed. He meant to revive in Alexandria the glory of Tyre, which he had ruined; and though he lived not to finish its noblest works, he was their real projector. Alexander in person traced the plan of the new city, and his architect, Dinarchus, directed its execution. He designed the shape of the whole after that of a Macedonian cloak, and his soldiers strewed meal to mark the line where its walls were to rise. These, when finished, enclosed a compass of eighty furlongs filled with comfortable abodes, and interspersed with palaces, temples, and obelisks of marble porphyry, that fatigued the eye with admiration. The main streets crossed each other at right angles, from wall to wall with beautiful breadth, and to the length, if it may be credited, of nearly nine miles. At their extremities the gates looked out on the gilded barges of the Nile, of fleets at sea under full sail, on a harbour that sheltered navies, and a lighthouse that was the mariner's star, and the wonder of the world.

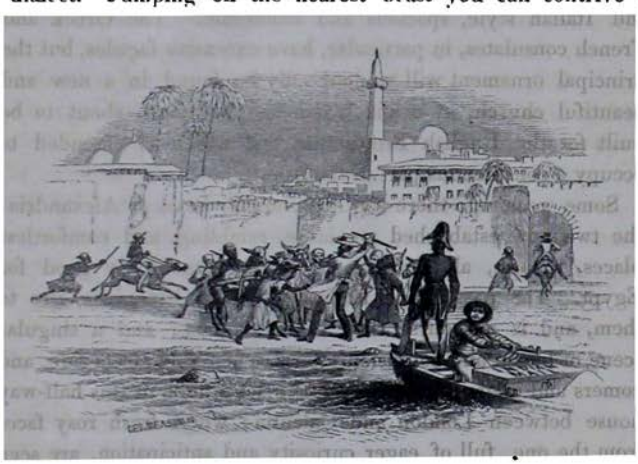
"The first inhabitants brought together into this capital of the West, were a heterogeneous mass that seemed hardly to promise its becoming the future asylum of letters and science. Egyptians, impressed with ancient manners and maxims, that had no sociality with the rest of the world—Jews, degraded by dependency, yet still regarding themselves as the only children of God—Macedonians, whose ruling passion was military pride—proper Greeks, who despised all the rest of mankind—and fugitive Asiatics, that were the sweepings of other conquests."

"There was nothing of the old Egyptian gravity and stability of character, says Sharpe, amidst the Alexandrian populace. Corrupted by wealth, and destitute of freedom, they seemed eager after nothing but food and horse races, those never-failing bribes for which the idle of every country will sell all that a man should hold most dear. A scurrilous song or a horse race would so rouse them into a quarrel, they could not hear for their own noise. They made but second-rate soldiers, while as singing-boys at the supper tables of the wealthy Romans they were much sought after, and all the world acknowledged that there were no fighting cocks equal to those reared by the Alexandrians."

The splendour thus described has left scarce a wreck behind; science and the muses have long since advanced westward; but in the character of the population, at least, there remains a strong resemblance to the ancient city of the Ptolemies. Sullen repulsive-looking Copts replace the exclusive old Egyptians, their reputed ancestors; Greeks and Jews too swarm as before, both, possibly, changed a little for the worse; nor would it perhaps be any great injustice to the mass of Levantines, or, with of course honourable exceptions, to the Franks, who make up the sum of the population, even now to designate them as the "sweepings" of their respective countries. The streets swarm with Turks in splendid many-coloured robes, half naked brown-skinned Arabs, glossy Negroes in loose white dresses and vermilion turbans, sordid shabby-looking Israelites in greasy black, smart, jaunty, rakish Greeks, staid heavy-browed Armenians, unkempt, unwashed Maltese ragamuffins, and Europeans of every shade of respectability, from lordly consuls down to refugee quacks and swindlers, and criminals who here get whitewashed and established anew. Here a Frank lady in the last Parisian bonnet; there Turkish women enveloped to the eyes in shapeless black wrappers; while dirty Christian monks, sallow Moslem dervishes, sore-eyed beggars, naked children covered with flies, and troops

of wandering, half savage dogs, with all the ordinary spectacles of Wapping and Portsmouth, present a singular and ever-shifting kaleidoscope of the most undignified phases of Eastern and Western existence, a perpetual carnival of the motley.

To land in the midst of all this is some trial of the temper; though one hardly knows whether to be more amused or provoked at the indefatigable donkey boys; who, before you have well set foot on the soil of this historic land, rush upon you simultaneously with their animals, and threaten to force you back again into the element you have just escaped, almost pulling you to pieces in the scuffle of which you are the object; assailing you the while in a deafening chorus of invitations and oaths in ludicrous variety, in a mingled Eastern and Western dialect. Jumping on the nearest beast you can contrive to



mount, no easy matter among the crowd of furious competitors, and opening a passage through the rest by the free use of any instrument at command, preferring, if attainable, a stout corbash made of bull-hide, that being the only convincing argument with an Alexandrian ass-boy—you advance at a full trot of the lively little animal, followed by the clamorous imp of a driver,

whose thundering blows upon its crupper, make you somewhat uneasy for the safety of your own ribs. Through unpaved streets, of half Oriental, half European aspect, in the lowest style of both countries, and which have been evidently run up in haste among the mud hovels of the poorer Arabs and the ruins of former buildings, you fly past shops kept by Greeks, Maltese, Italians, French, and sometimes, though rarely, by English; who appear, in keeping with the town, dressed in a half European, half Asiatic style, very dirty and very grotesque, till, finally, you emerge into the great square, an open, unpaved expanse, where are situated the different consulates, hotels, and cafes, and the comptoirs of the most wealthy merchants. This is of course the modern part of the city, and its appearance is striking. The buildings are all in the French and Italian style, spacious and handsome. The Greek and French consulates, in particular, have extensive façades, but the principal ornament will undoubtedly be found in a new and beautiful church, of original and happy design, about to be built for the English Protestants, and which is intended to occupy a conspicuous part of the square.

Some years ago there was no tolerable hotel at Alexandria: the two now established are large, rambling, and comfortless places, though, all things considered, surprisingly good for Egypt. The passage of Indian travellers has given rise to them, and is of course their chief support; and a singular scene of bustle and confusion occurs, when tide meets tide, and comers and goers mingle for a few brief hours, in this half-way house between London and Calcutta; where fresh rosy faces from the one, full of eager curiosity and anticipation, are seen side by side with the languid, exhausted, apathetic exiles, returning from the other.

Shortly after I took up my abode at "Ray's," the mail arrived from Bombay, and as it was high noon, and very hot, and a great scramble for rooms was going on, I had locked myself quietly into my chamber for "an second," to read. One

after another rushed up-stairs, and tried the handle of the door in quest of a dormitory for himself, but to no purpose. When the hubbub had subsided, I got up to depart, but on turning the door handle, found that some one had fastened me in. How to get out was the question—bells there were none—and I went to the window to watch for somebody, who, peradventure, would come up to release me. Meanwhile a most amusing scene was going on in the square below. Some twenty or thirty donkey-boys had wedged in the hotel door to pounce upon the new comers as they emerged, all dressed and ready to start on a ramble to the lions of Alexandria. As they successively came forth, both ladies and gentlemen, a general rush was made upon them, their toes were trodden on, and their coats and gowns nearly torn off their backs in the scramble for their possession; one or two ladies being pulled down by rival boys from the asses upon which they had mounted, to the no small detriment of their dress and delicacy. The battle now raged—the clamour was deafening—the Englishmen's blood was up; they struck out fiercely with fists and sticks, but when menaced with a knock-down blow, the Alexandrian boy has a knack of thrusting up the head of his donkey to receive the shock, while he dodges behind, which is rather discouraging to an assailant. As one was driven back another filled his place. My tears were running down with laughter at the hopeless predicament of the travellers, and I was wondering how they would ever contrive to get out, when I was startled by an apparition which instantly changed the state of affairs. A tall gaunt figure, more than six feet high, leaped from a side shop, with a tremendous yell, into the midst of the belligerents. He was armed with a leathern thong, (which, by the way, every Egyptian traveller should procure,) very thick, and even longer than his own long body—this he grasped firmly by the middle, and plied right and left with such amazing address and vigour, that neither boy nor beast could stand it for a moment. The rout was instantaneous, and

the discomfiture complete. There was a general scatter of the ass-boys all over the square, the Anglo-Indians were free, and their great deliverer, with a grave bow to them, which might have befitted the knight of La Mancha himself, turned round to re-enter his abode. In doing so his features were revealed, I instantly recognised him, and seizing a slipper, directed it with unerring precision upon the top of his hat, at the same time shouting his name at the highest pitch of my lungs. He looked upwards to my whereabout with a countenance inflamed with wrath, which gave place to a grim smile as he recognised the features of an old acquaintance. I bawled forth my predicament, whereupon, hurrying into the hotel, he ran up-stairs and released me from my durance. In what strange ways does a traveller frequently fall in with those with whom he was long since intimate! Here was a friend I had sailed with some years before in the Archipelago, and in whose society I had performed quarantine in the old Lazaret of Syra, a barrack swarming with rats, and almost pestilential with filth. Many an adventure we had together, and many a good story he told me, though this is not the place to dwell upon either. Suffice it to say, that after being battered about from place to place in the Levant, he had at length contrived to find a quiet haven in the city of Alexandria.

From the balconies of these hotels, the view over the great square is amusing, still presenting the same mixed and semi-oriental character. The elegant equipages of the consuls, and the plain attire of the well-mounted Frank gentlemen, and their numerous compatriots of lower degree on donkeys or on foot, contrast boldly with the costume of the natives. The 'Fellahs,' or Egyptian Arabs, (who are supposed by some to be, rather than the Copts, the real descendants of the ancient Egyptians, of course with some modification,)' although they fulfil the offices of labourers, porters, water-carriers, 'sais' or grooms, and donkey drivers, interest the spectator at once as a fine race; and there is something very graceful and antique in the ap-

pearance at a little distance, for they will rarely bear close inspection, of the lower class of the females; untrammelled by tight garments of any sort, their costume consisting of a long loose blue robe, their hands and feet being uncovered, the wrists and ancles adorned with bracelets, their gait is easy and noble, and the necessity of bearing their water jars on their heads, or their naked children on their shoulders, causes them to assume an erect position, and gives them their full stature. Their mud-built hovels, which the first storm destroys, in the midst of heaps of filth and offal, are the favourite resort of troops of those half-savage and masterless curs, that fiercely assail any one who attempts to penetrate into their quarter. Childhood, which, among the poorer class in other countries, often flourishes in the midst of poverty and squalor, in its happy buoyancy, here seems the most wretched period of existence; the meagre listless infants, covered with dirt and flies, which form a black ring around their apparently weak diseased eyes, present a distressing spectacle. Yet, with all the hardships and oppression they suffer, the Arabs, even of the lowest class, are a most immeasurably noisy, lively, mercurial people. Their woes sit more lightly on them than on our own overworked and degraded poor, whom nothing but the gin shop can arouse; for one can hardly go out into the open spaces of the suburbs without falling in with groups, assembled round some musician or story-teller, filling their imaginations with all the wonders of oriental romance, into which they can retreat from the wretchedness of their real present condition.

Passing through these mingled currents of Eastern and Western life, I had an excellent view of the remarkable man, at whose bidding they have poured into Alexandria, and given to her a phœnix-like prosperity. He rode slowly by on horseback; I was struck with his bearing, and with the searching glance of his quick grey eyes. His appearance is dignified, and very different from that of the late Ibrahim, his son, whose traits were wholly coarse and unrefined.

Leaving the noise and bustle of the great square, a few minutes' walk brings us among the towering mounds which entomb the ancient city; white villas with gardens of waving palms start up at intervals, among the desolations of ages; new roads and avenues pierce through the accumulated sand and rubbish, and disclose sculptured fragments and yawning foundations, sometimes bringing forth even treasures of art; and as these changes are still further carried on, much light will doubtless be thrown upon many obscure points in the topography. To obtain an idea of the comparative site of the ancient and modern cities, it is well to ascend to the height of Fort Cretin, but a few minutes' ride from the great square. The view hence over the Mediterranean, the two harbours, the lake Mareotis, and the entire area of splendid and populous Alexandria, is so complete, that it requires little stretch of imagination to recall vividly the many illustrious actors on this memorable theatre, and the scenes in which they have figured, from its foundation even to our day. This will appear from the detailed description which accompanies the careful panoramic sketch taken from this point.

The island of Pharos had long been used as a shelter for vessels, and a small town called Rhacotis existed there, but, as already stated, it was to Alexander that the idea first occurred of taking full advantage of the site for the establishment of a great commercial city. In the panoramic sketch, the position of the island is seen extending from the point on which stands the *new* light-house to that occupied by the old castle—the site of the celebrated Pharos, erected by the architect Sostratus of Cnidus, by order of Ptolemy Philadelphus, which was counted one of the wonders of the world. The island was united to the main-land by a causeway called the Heptastadium, through which there was a communication from one harbour to the other; this, in the course of ages, has become, like that of Tyre, broad enough to serve as the site of the greater part of the modern city. Of the double harbour formed

by this causeway, the eastern, now called the old harbour, was originally the most important; and around it, on the land which, as appears in the sketch, is now nearly clear of buildings, stood formerly the quarter called Bruchion, containing the palace, the museum, with the library, theatre, &c., all remains of which have utterly perished. The site of the Cæsarium, or temple of Cæsar, is marked by the two obelisks, one of which is now prostrate, called Cleopatra's needles; and beyond the projecting rock, mid-way between these monuments and Lochias point, stood, at the end of a mole, the Timonium, so called because built by Antony, for his desponding retirement after the battle of Actium. This, it is hardly necessary to say, was the principal quarter of Alexandria, that to which its historical interest principally belongs. On the other side of Cleopatra's needles, were the market and the docks, occupying, as Wilkinson supposes, the site of the great square, and extending to the Heptastadium. There was an island called the Antirhodus, now destroyed—it is supposed by the action of the sea, and within its shelter a closed port belonging to the palace. No details of the western harbour are given by Strabo, the only point noticed being the artificial basin of Rhacotis, whence a canal went off to the lake Mareotis, as at present. This harbour, anciently called Eunostus, is now the principal one; and on the shore are the palace of the pasha and the arsenal. The modern city chiefly occupies, as will be seen, the intervening space between the two harbours, but it is extending gradually inland. The whole of the space between the sea and the lake Mareotis, was covered by the ancient city. Two great streets, a hundred feet wide, intersected it at right angles, the general direction of which may still be traced; one of these passed from the lake Mareotis, below Pompey's pillar, to the great harbour, so that the shipping was visible at each extremity. It will be seen that but a very small part of the immense site of the ancient city is now built upon; an irregular wall encloses about half of it, but

EUNOSTUS ex OLD PORT — ISLAND OF PHAROS — NEW PORT

even this space is barely dotted here and there with modern villas, mosques, and convents, enclosed in extensive gardens of date-palms, thinly scattered among the immense mounds which cover in the ruins of this once so magnificent city.

Of its numerous public and private monuments, the only standing are the so called 'needles of Cleopatra,' and 'Pompey's pillar.' One of the former obelisks, more ancient than the foundation of the city, still remains, erect among its ruinous heaps. It is supposed to have been brought from Heliopolis, the seat of all the wisdom of the Egyptians, until this became transferred to Alexandria; it bears the name of Thotmes III., and its lateral hieroglyphics that of the great Rameses. Pompey's pillar, as it is commonly called, stands on the lonely mounds overlooking the lake Mareotis and the modern city. It is a noble column; the shaft, a single block of red granite, about seventy feet high; the total height being ninety-five feet; its substructions were once under the level of the ground, and formed part of a paved area. Mr. Sharpe, indeed, supposes this to have been the site of the Serapion, and from the Arab historians cited by Mr. Lane, it appears that in the days of Amer, the Arab conqueror of Egypt, it belonged to a magnificent building, containing the library which was burnt by order of the caliph Omar. No less than four hundred columns are described as having surrounded it, which were thrown into the sea. An inscription on the column shows it to have been erected, some contend only dedicated anew, by Publius, prefect of Egypt to the emperor Diocletian. The monks of the Coptic convent, seen in the view, claim still to possess the relics of St. Mark, who suffered martyrdom at Alexandria, and whose remains were said to have been transported to Venice.

Beyond these isolated monuments there is little else which might seem even to point out the site of other famous structures; though there can be no doubt that, if the city increases, as excavation prevails, further discoveries will be made, some objects of great value having been already dug up. The cata-

combs, to the west of the city, would alone testify to its former extent, though only one of the monuments merits particular notice, an elegant excavation with a Greek façade of great purity of style.

In the panorama the site of Cæsar's camp is also indicated, the scene of the engagement where fell the gallant Abercrombie; and a few miles farther, in the same direction, is the memorable bay of Aboukir. An Englishman is in little danger of forgetting that, in addition to the common stock of historical associations connected with Alexandria, he has many peculiar to himself. If Shakspeare, by his magical creations, could make of Venice "a fairy city of the heart;" the same potent enchanter has cast his spells over the desolate shore of the Bruchion—the scene of the luxury and despair of the Egyptian queen and her Roman lover. And the valour of England, no less than her genius, has hallowed the surrounding land and sea with a host of imperishable recollections.

The ancient and modern history of Alexandria alone would fill a volume, and one, too, of the most stirring interest. But this is altogether beyond our province, and we can but allude to its principal vicissitudes. Its rapid growth and the splendour it ultimately attained fully justified the anticipations of the Macedonian conqueror. Gradually withdrawing from other channels, the commerce of Arabia and India with the West flowed through Egypt, by way of the ports of the Red Sea, the Nile, and the ancient canal leading to this unrivalled emporium, and continued thus, both under the Ptolemies and the Romans, until the discovery of the passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope. Science also, fostered by the munificence of the Ptolemies, retired from her ancient seat at Heliopolis to this city. "The sages of the Museum, who lodged in that part of the palace of the Lagides, might there be said to live as the priests of the muses, taking the word in a wide sense, as the patronesses of knowledge. They had gardens, and alleys, and galleries, where they walked and conversed; a common hall, where they

made their repasts; and public rooms, where they gave instruction to the youth who crowded from all parts of the world to hear their lectures. This museum, a unique establishment in literary history, was founded by Ptolemy Soter. And with regard to medicine, mathematics, mechanics, and astronomy, the shades of the greatest modern reformers of Europe would surely inform us that science cannot look back too gratefully to the memory of Alexandria."* The celebrated library of the Ptolemies' collection, ultimately amounted to seven hundred thousand volumes; four hundred thousand were contained in the library of this museum, the remaining three hundred thousand in that attached to the temple of Serapis.† The former was accidentally destroyed in the war of Julius Cæsar with the Alexandrians; and the remaining collection, after various losses and transmutations, till it is supposed ultimately to have largely consisted rather of works of theological controversy than of literature and science, met its fate at the hands of the fanatic caliph Omar, at the time of the Mohammedan conquest, who ordered its destruction, on the ground that if the contents of the books were agreeable to the word of God, i. e. the Koran, there could be no need of them, and if the contrary, they ought not to exist; and they were accordingly used for heating the four thousand baths of the great city of the West, as it is styled by Omar in his letter to the caliph, which then contained, besides four thousand palaces, four hundred theatres or places of amusement, twelve thousand shops for the sale of vegetables, and forty thousand tributary Jews.

Rapidly, indeed, must the trade and wealth of Alexandria have declined under the combined and ruinous disadvantages of the Moslem rule, and the new course of the Indian trade, until just before the time of Mehemet Ali, when it was a miserable place of a few thousand inhabitants, cut off from the valley of the Nile by the ruin of the ancient canal. Under his

* Campbell's Lectures. † Wilkinson.

government it has greatly revived both in political and commercial importance, and the re-opening of the canal has restored to its harbour all the trade of Egypt. While the overland communication with India, if it has not brought back the whole of this branch of commerce into its old channel, seems to open up prospects of increasing interest on this ground also.

To the traveller, anxious for the moment which shall disclose to him the wonders of the land of the Pharaohs, Alexandria is but a dull place, though in the way of society there are more resources than elsewhere. But he is here on the threshold of Egypt, which he is impatient to overleap and proceed onward. "Though the rest of Egypt was governed by Egyptian laws and judges," says Mr. Sharpe, "the city of Alexandria was under Macedonian law. It did not form part of the name of Hermopolites, in which it was built. It scarcely formed a part of Egypt, but was a Greek state in its neighbourhood, holding the Egyptians in a state of slavery. In that city, no Egyptian could live without feeling himself of a conquered race: he was not admitted except by an especial favour to the privileges of Macedonian citizenship, while they were at once granted to every Greek and to every Jew who would settle there. Hence, although the city was crowded with Egyptians who kept the shops and filled the lower ranks, and though the Greeks must often have married Egyptian wives, yet here these mixed races were never melted down into Egyptians. Whenever, during the reigns of the Ptolemies, the citizens of the capital of Egypt met in public assembly in the Gymnasium, they were addressed, "Ye men of Macedonia."

We shall not pause here to speak of the modern improvements by Mehemet Ali, which have justly excited the astonishment of travellers. The new palace, the arsenal, the numerous ships of war, vying in appearance at least with the proudest of European navies, the extension of the fortifications, &c., may well demand our admiration as the creation of one man; they have but these trifling drawbacks, that they are utterly dispro-

portionate to the wants and means of Egypt, hastily got up by foreign rather than native energy, at the expense of the heart's blood of the country, which has been rapidly depopulating, and utterly draining of its vital resources, till the unhappy population have sunk to the lowest depth of misery. To the superficial observer, Egypt may indeed appear to be about to arise from her long depression, and to assume again a rank among the nations; but the spasmodic effort can only result in a profound exhaustion, unless, indeed, a far different and humaner system were pursued. Perhaps Mehemet Ali may be said rather to have destroyed than built up — destroyed, that is, what remained of the old Mohammedan system, and, by his numerous innovations, prepared the way for the construction of a new. Tottering, as he is, on the verge of the grave, he may die, perhaps, while these sheets are going through the press;* and then what is to be the issue of all his ambitious schemes, and what is to be the fate of Egypt? These are questions of which it may be imprudent to hazard just now the solution.

* The event has justified this anticipation—he died on the 2nd of August, 1849.

CHAPTER II.

DEPARTURE FROM ALEXANDRIA.—THE CANAL.—FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE NILE VALLEY.—ITS AGRICULTURE AND ANIMALS.—ANTIQUITY OF EGYPT.—SAIS AND NAUCRATIS.—FIRST SIGHT OF THE PYRAMIDS.—ARRIVAL AT CAIRO.

On a former visit to Egypt, before the introduction of steamers between Alexandria and Cairo, I was compelled to begin my troubles at the former city, i. e. to provide myself with a servant, hire a boat, procure carpet, mattress and bedding, lay in a store of provisions, and a "batterie de cuisine," with a variety of minor articles, which would fill a page or two to enumerate. But now, as opportunities occur by the steamer every few days, and as a comfortable hotel awaits the traveller's arrival at Cairo, he needs not to encumber himself with such matters beforehand, unless, indeed, he is desirous of hiring a house or lodgings at the metropolis. There is so little to see between Alexandria and Cairo, that the saving of time and discomfort by steaming is very great. I have a feeling remembrance of the weary hours passed, during a former journey on the canal, in a huge slow-moving Djerm, with a crowded company of the lower class of Egyptians, and of the horrid consequences of unavoidable proximity with their filthy persons and populous garments. Now a clean and comfortable barge, towed by a small steamer, in a third of the time, brings you to Atfeh, where you are transferred to another snug steamboat waiting for you on the Nile, and in about twelve hours reach Cairo. This canal, seventy miles in length, which connects the port of Alexandria with the Rosetta

branch of the Nile, was cut in 1819, by Mehemet Ali, and is a fair sample at once of the important improvements introduced by him, at the suggestion, it is said, of Mr. Briggs; and of the reckless, despotic haste, bungling mismanagement, and even cruel indifference to the claims and sufferings of his subjects, with which they are effected. A levy was ordered, and three hundred thousand men were gathered on the scene of action; but, owing to the want of a proper supply of provisions, or even tools, they were compelled to labour with their hands. The excavations were lower than the level of the sea, often deep in the mud, and thus, without adequate food or shelter from the deleterious atmosphere, and hurried on with barbarous indifference to life, thirty thousand are said to have perished in the course of the seven months in which the work was completed. The canal, dull as it is, is somewhat animated by the constant passage of boats laden with the rich produce of the Valley of the Nile; rice, corn, and cotton, for shipment at Alexandria—to enrich alone the grasping ruler and a few merchants, without leaving a trace of prosperity or comfort among the unhappy people from whose confiscated lands it is reaped, and by whose ill-paid labours it is produced. There is little to see on its banks beyond a distant glimpse of Aboukir Bay. One is weary, even before reaching the Nile, at the characteristics of wretchedness which every where meet the eye,—at the universal presence of the squalid mud dwelling or hovel of the Fellah, the naked filthy children basking among hosts of yelping dogs, and the clamorous, greasy, blear-eyed population, whose tattered garments seem alive with vermin,—at the disgusting anomaly of men, who, when engaged in boating, often divest themselves of every rag, while the women, veiled to the eyes, are striving to hide their ugly faces, —with many other indescribable spectacles, which indicate too plainly the absence of ordinary decency in a degraded people. In vain you look for the presence of any middle order; with few exceptions, all appear alike, there is but one

class, and that sunk in a wide-spreading dead uniformity of misery,—all indicates the existence of a race of slaves, who owe to kind nature, to the lightsome temperament induced by the serenity of the climate, and the few wants it occasions, the only mitigation of their unhappy condition, of which misgovernment and tyranny are unable to deprive them.

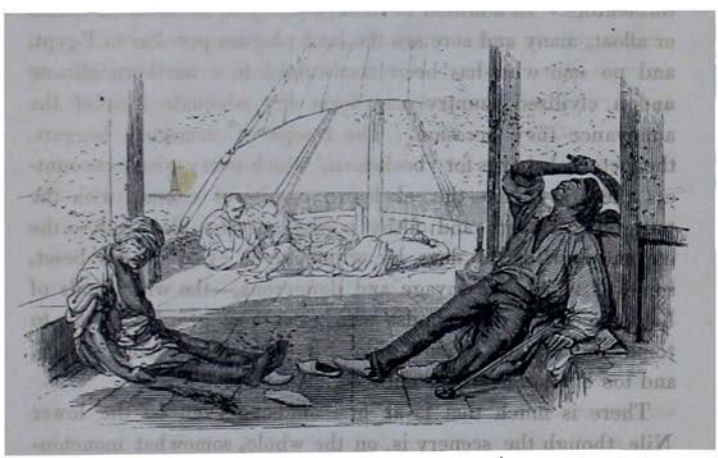
Notwithstanding the very great conveniences enjoyed in travelling by a steamer, I shall always rejoice that my first impressions on the Nile were received in another kind of craft. I arrived at Atfeh, where the canal joins the river, in the evening, and found a small boat belonging to the then existing Transit Company, newly painted and fitted. A servant was on board to provide for and attend the hirer. Though it could not be deemed an economical conveyance, it was, for the size, exceedingly comfortable, and fitted with every requisite save bedding, which I had with me. It had, moreover, the honourable distinction of being the fastest sailer on the river, as I soon perceived, to my great satisfaction, by leaving every thing behind. Happily, I had not yet learned the trifling drawback to this advantage which afterwards came to light, that from its sharp build and the heavy press of sail that it carried, it had been more than once capsized.

I hastened on board; the sun had sunk and given place to a rosy twilight, and the moon peeped up above the rich level of the Delta. And here I must notice, that what reconciles the traveller to this land of plagues—of flies and beggars, of dogs and dust and vermin, is not alone the monumental wonders on the banks of the Nile, but the beauty of the climate, the lightness of the air, inspiring a genial luxury of sensation, the glorious unfailing sun-set and serene twilight, reflected in the noble river, and casting over the hoary remains of antiquity a glow and gorgeousness of hue which heightens their melancholy grandeur, and gilding over a mud village until even its filth and misery are forgotten. I mounted the roof of the little cabin as the broad latine sail swelled smoothly under the

pressure of the Etesian wind, which, at this season of the inundation, by a wonderful provision of nature, blows steadily from the north, thus alone enabling vessels to stem the powerful current of the rising Nile. I had embarked on that ancient and sacred river, renewing before my eyes its majestic current, diffusing the same blessings to its rich valley as it had done in the days when Egypt was a mighty kingdom, when Thebes and Memphis and the pyramids arose upon its borders. The rich fans of the plume-like palms on the banks were painted on the warm glow of the westward horizon, the level valley with its wealth of production spread away in dusky haze, but the breeze brought off from the shore its odorous musky fragrance, lamps twinkled in the cottages, and cast their reflections into the glassy stream—the noise and babble of the Fellahs, and sounds of the Darrabuka, or Egyptian drum, came off and died away as we sailed past the villages on the bank. The boat, with her broad sails and her long wake whitening in the moon, and her Arab crew, lying upon deck, chanting their peculiar and plaintive songs, flew rapidly along through those historic waters. I sat up to a late hour, so delightful was my first impression of the patriarch of rivers.

But on the following morning the scene was wholly changed. On awaking, we were close to the alluvial chocolate-coloured bank, the rich deposit of countless inundations, and the crew on shore were engaged in the toilsome task of tracking or hauling the boat, (a process represented on the ancient sculptures,) to the music of a monotonous chant, which they seemed scarce able to utter. There was not a breath of air, and the warm, soft, cloudless sky was reflected back from the glassy surface of the broad yellow river. The heat was close and overpowering. Hours like these, of which the traveller on the Nile must make up his mind to not a few, are indeed awfully wearisome. It is too hot to go on shore and walk through the deep dust of the unsheltered bank, and cooped up and panting for breath in the narrow cabin of your boat, you seem doomed,

ere the ardours of noon abate, to be roasted alive, like a crab in its own shell. Every thing inspires listless, restless, irritable ennui, only to be alleviated, if haply at all, by the fumes of the consoling pipe. It is well if, when thus becalmed and panting in a Nile boat, you are exempt (as from the recent painting and cleansing of mine was happily my case) from the company of bugs, fleas, cockroaches, and other creatures more minute and "familiar to man." But to the incursions of flies and mosquitoes you lie helplessly exposed. The former, stingless though they be, may fairly take the lead as the principal of Egypt's plagues, and at the bare recollection of past sufferings one cannot help being animated with a feeling of vengeance. Their name is legion. You can neither eat nor drink without the risk of swallowing them, nor doze, or read, or draw, without a constant trial of temper from their incessant trailing over your eyes and ears and nostrils. The natives, being used to it, contrive to drop off into an uneasy slumber, but for



a new comer this is a hopeless attempt. You sit all day with a fly-switch in your hand, and though a dozen times you rise in murderous mood, and clear the walls of the

cabin with wholesale slaughter, a few moments afterwards they blacken its panels as before, and you piteously invoke the breeze which would perhaps disperse the buzzing swarm of your mud-born tormentors, or, peradventure, waft you beyond their reach. In the fat slime of the Delta they are particularly numerous and active. I was told by a friend, who one evening pitched his tent on this rich level, that in addition to these plagues, he was visited by a numerous company of toads, which he kicked out of his tent without much ceremony. One, however, was accidentally left behind; upon which, recumbent on his carpet in the midst of a tormenting swarm of flies and mosquitoes, the traveller's eye mechanically rested. The creature, 'perdu' in his nook, was deeply intent on snapping up fly after fly as they darted past his open maw; upon which sight my friend immediately arose, and drove in again the whole company of the toads, in the hope of some trifling diminution, through their exertions, of the number of his petty tormentors. In addition to these, equally to be dreaded ashore or afloat, many and sore are the land plagues peculiar to Egypt, and no one who has been accustomed to a northern climate and a civilized country, can form any adequate idea of the annoyance they occasion. The troops of clamorous beggars, their eternal chorus for 'beckshish,' which every where encounters the traveller,—the alarming results of contact with the tattered garments and filthy persons of the claimants,—the eternal howling of dogs by which he is every where beset, some of which are savage and dangerous,—the whirlwinds of hot suffocating dust amidst which he must grope his way to tomb and temple, irritate alike his eyes, lungs, and temper, and too often convert his enthusiasm to fury.

There is much that is at first amusing even on the lower Nile, though the scenery is, on the whole, somewhat monotonous. The villages of mud huts, embowered in palm groves that line the bank, with their pretty white minarets, and their noisy babbling crowd of Fellahs,—the glimpses of the vivid

green valley and its yellow desert boundary, like life and death in startling juxtaposition and contrast,—the sandy shoals covered with pelicans or ibises of brilliant white plumage, large flights of wild fowls and of pigeons from the villages,—the picturesque boats with their gay-coloured passengers,—the men paddling along on rafts of water melons or pottery,—the little thronged cafés under the deep shade of a grove of sycamore and palms,—the creaking 'Sakias,' or water-wheels used for the purpose of irrigation, all form a sort of slow, moving panorama, which, seen under a brilliant sky, by their lively novelty, serve to amuse for a while the tedium of our noonday progress. Though the characteristics of the scene have never materially changed, the river must have been infinitely more lively in former times, and the boats innumerable, from the state vessels of the kings and principal personages, with their high prows, hieroglyphic inscriptions, banks of oars, and brilliantly painted and richly ornamented sails, down to the ordinary passage boat for the humbler classes. These sails, unlike the present triangular ones, were square, and more safe and manageable. The crowd upon the banks must have been incessant, with chariots and horsemen. Each village then was grouped around its elegant temple amidst groves of palm. The extensive villas of the richer inhabitants, in a style half gay, half grave, with gardens and *vineyards*—now unknown to Egypt, studded the plain, which was, besides, in a far higher state of cultivation than at the present day. Then there were the costumes of the different castes, and their infinite variety of avocations, to add to the life and beauty of the picture in the Pharaonic ages. A light uncertain breeze sometimes relieved the boatmen from their laborious tracking, but it was not till afternoon that some real stormy puffs indicated the approach of the favouring Etesian breeze. The coming on of the sudden gusts on the Nile is at first very startling and alarming; no action of driving clouds accompanies the squall, the sky above is perfectly serene, but, looking across the desert in the direction of the wind, you see

tall columns of dust and sand, sometimes six or seven hundred feet in height, whirling sublimely across the desert, rapidly crossing the alluvial valley, and nearing the river, till the whole cloud, sweeping off the bank, involves the ruffled surface of the stream in temporary obscurity, and half buries the boat on the leeward side. Without the utmost attention, indeed, there is great danger of suddenly capsizing, as indeed often happens, when the boatmen are too negligent to keep the rope, by which the huge sails are attached to the side, loose in their hand, so as to let it fly if the gust is dangerously violent.

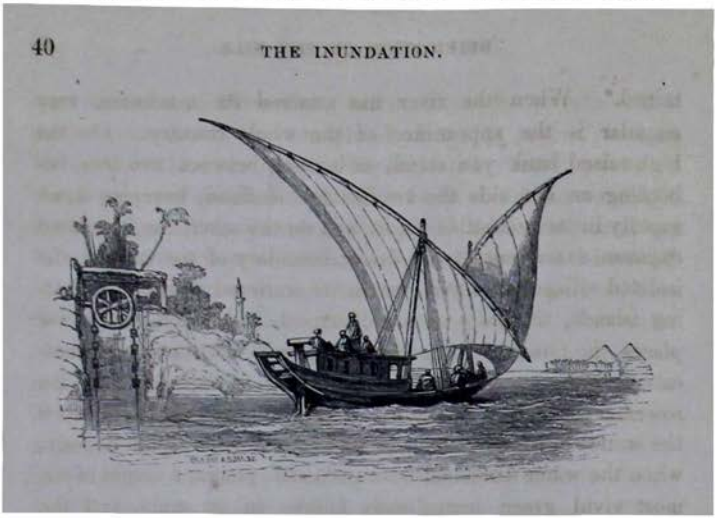
With the afternoon the breeze set in, and we sailed merrily along, passing one or two downward-bound boats, crammed almost to suffocation with a noisy motley crowd, in bright coloured costumes, proceeding to the neighbouring festival at Tanta, in commemoration of the birth of the Seyd Ahmad El-Bedawee, a celebrated Moslem saint; a scene of licence greatly resembling the ancient Egyptian Saturnalia; for the extremes of fanaticism and sensual indulgence are wont to be combined in both ancient and modern instances. Soon after arriving in Cairo, I heard of the loss of one of these very boats in a squall, having, as the rumour went, some two or three hundred persons on board, of whom the greater part went down. But such occurrences, though by no means unfrequent, occasion small concern in a land where the penny a line trade in 'moving accidents' has no existence, and where coroner's inquests are unknown.

One soon seems to breathe the air of profound antiquity on the banks of the Nile. We were now sailing near the sites of Naucratis and Sais, important settlements of Greek traders, who, from the earliest ages, carried on the chief part of the Egyptian trade in the Mediterranean. For the Egyptians, says Mr. Sharpe, like the Hindoos, looked upon the sea and voyages by sea with religious dread, and they held seafaring persons in dislike as impious. These Greeks lived under their own laws and customs, and obtained many privileges of the

Egyptian kings. The inhabitants of Naucratis were allowed to build temples for their own religion, which were erected at the expense of their countrymen in Greece. The overthrow of this little state probably took place in the reign of Amunmai Anemnib, and the chiefs driven out of Egypt carried with them to Greece so much that was valuable of Egyptian science and civilization, that many of the Grecian cities dated their foundation from their arrival. They gave to Greece its alphabet and its mythology, and so willing were the Greeks at all times to look back to Lower Egypt as the birth-place of their civilization, that instead of seeing that a handful of Greeks had in old times settled in the Delta, they thought Athens itself a colony from Sais. Thus at this period of Egyptian history, when we have traced the chronology of Theban kings for perhaps six hundred years, we are only entering on the fabulous ages of Greece. About four generations before the Trojan war, Sais became the seat of government instead of Thebes, under the last of the Ethiopian kings who conquered Egypt. It was in the decline of her greatness, when her own valour was sunk, and the Egyptian monarchs sought for the aid of Greek mercenaries. The kings of Sais were in fact as much Greek as Egyptian. Under their protection the sages of Greece visited Egypt in search of knowledge. Of these, Thales was the first. Solon soon afterwards came to Naucratis as a merchant, bringing the olive oil of Athens to exchange for the corn of Egypt and the luxuries of India; and while thus engaged, studied the manners and customs of the country. After selling his cargo, he visited Sais, and conversed with Egyptian priests. They called the Greeks mere children of yesterday, and professed to have a knowledge of the last nine thousand years. Solon returned to Athens with his mind enriched, and the Athenians were then establishing their democratic form of government, and Solon became their great philosophical lawgiver. Neith, the Egyptian Minerva, was principally worshipped at Sais, and it was celebrated for its splendid festival "of the Sacred Lamps."

The general characteristics of this wonderful Nile valley are so well known, that it is hardly necessary to dwell at much length on them. From 'far Syene' and the rocky outposts of Nubia to the rich level of the Delta, the river preserves much the same breadth, of half a mile to three quarters, unless where its course is interrupted by islands, or contracted by rocks. On either hand is a green stripe of verdure, extending to the limit of the waters; beyond is the illimitable desert. At this season the swollen stream comes down with great rapidity, and, at the angles of the banks, the current is so powerful as to require the efforts of all the crew to tow the boat against it. With the north wind a complete sea gets up. The cultivated land is adorned principally by groves of palm,—the great beauty of Egypt—sometimes of considerable extent, at others thinly scattered; here and there too is a dark cluster of sycamores, or a grove of fragrant acacia, haunted by thousands of birds. The great thoroughfare all up the river is along its bank, raised above the level of the inundation, and throwing off here and there a branch communicating with the villages remote from the river. There is a melancholy sameness in these wretched mud villages and small towns, built amid raised mounds of rubbish and filth which the wind scatters in clouds into every cranny of the place—a prominent Egyptian plague, as there is also in the abject population who inhabit them; the women, in particular, beautiful for a brief year or two of girlhood, become tanned by the heat, and dried up by the climate and the hard toils to which they are subjected, till they become unspeakably hideous crones, whose aspect inspires a shudder of disgust.

At evening, when the breeze lulled for a while, I went ashore in a grove of palms, and looked over the verdant level glowing in the slanting beams of the declining sun. The rich brown soil in the dry season, and when the river is low, requires irrigation to maintain its constant fertility. The method adopted in Lower Egypt, is, as represented in the cut, to sink a pit in the bank, into which the water flows, and it is



then raised, for this purpose, to the surface above by means of a broad wheel turned by a buffalo; round the wheel is a band with numerous jars attached to it, which, as the wheel revolves, dip into and bring up the water, emptying it into a channel, from which it is distributed in trenches about the thirsty level. Thus irrigated, it will yield annually three crops; being first sown with wheat or barley; a second time, after the vernal equinox, with indigo, cotton, millet, or some similar produce; and again, about the summer solstice, with millet or maize. These, and the numerous fruits and vegetables which succeed one another in similar succession, render the rich valley of the Nile a carpet of perpetual verdure, except during the period of the inundation, and justify the description of it given by Amer, its Arabian conqueror, that "according to the change of seasons, it is adorned with a *silver* wave, a verdant *emerald*, and the deep yellow of a *golden* harvest!" The river begins to rise about the end of June, and attains its greatest height towards the end of September; its waters are retained, as the inundation subsides, in numerous canals, for the highest rise of the Nile ever known would scarcely be sufficient, if the waters were not then artificially re-

tained.* When the river has attained its maximum, very singular is the appearance of the whole country. On the high-raised bank you stand, as it were, between two seas, beholding on one side the swollen turbid flood, hurrying down rapidly in its irresistible might, and on the other, the inundated expanse, extending to the desert boundary of the valley; the isolated villages in their groves are scattered about like floating islands, the palm-trees half-buried, and, except in a few places, the Gise, or dyke, affords the sole circuitous communication from one place to another. As it begins to fall, the sower, wading into the mud, literally "casts his bread upon the waters" which cover the recent and still liquid deposit; when the water drains off from particular places, a carpet of the most vivid green immediately follows in its train, and the face of the land glows with a new-created beauty. The level of the alluvial land, as well as the bed of the river, are gradually raised, so that the constant aggression of the sandy desert on the fertile valley, from which some have anticipated the ultimate destruction of the latter, is, though triumphant at some points, continually counteracted in the main, by the eternally-vivifying influence of the waters. The river to whose beneficent agency the ancient Egyptians owed their greatness, was, with their characteristic reverence of spirit, regarded by them as peculiarly sacred. "The god Nilus," says Wilkinson, "is frequently represented with water-plants growing from his head, and binding up stalks or flowers indicative of the inundation. Sometimes he bears fruits and flowers, emblematic of its fertilizing influence. In all the cities on the banks of the river certain priests were exclusively appointed to the service of this deity; and if a corpse were found upon the sacred shore, the nearest town was obliged to embalm and bury it with every mark of honour." The water of the Nile, turbid and muddy, seems little at first to merit the praises lavished on it; its appearance is disgusting, and its taste at first insipid, the temper-

* Mrs. Poole.

ature being rather warm, but by degrees one comes to relish it beyond any other, and to drink more of it than is prudent. The ordinary mode of cooling it is in jars of porous clay called 'Goollehs,' the best of which are made at Keneh in Upper Egypt. Among the brackish springs of the desert, Esau, had he but once tasted of the Nile, would far rather have bartered his birthright for a draught of its delicious beverage than for his mess of lentile pottage.

The animals chiefly seen on the river's banks, are the camel, ass, and buffalo. The camel, which in the level valley of the Nile attains unusual size and stoutness of limb, is now the common beast of burden, both for agricultural and other purposes. It is singular, says Gliddon, that the introduction of this animal should have been comparatively recent. But it must doubtless have always existed in the interior of Asia, it figured upon the sculptures of Nineveh, although not represented on any Egyptian monuments of the pyramidal period. The horse, though not common on the monuments, appears in use with chariots after the twelfth dynasty. The Egyptian buffalo is of uncouth, unwieldy appearance, dingy black in colour, the neck set lower than the back, and the head furnished with large flat horns thrown back like those of goats or sheep. Their aspect is sullen and ferocious, but, unless startled, they are perfectly gentle. You see them advancing along the bank with a small boy perched on their hump. They yield a considerable quantity of milk, and subsist on the coarse rushy grass which covers the dry bank of the river. Wilkinson observes, that he has met with no representation of the buffalo among the monuments, but from its being indigenous in Abyssinia and common in the country, he infers that it was not unknown to the ancient Egyptians. Whole herds of these animals are seen, as before stated, in the heat of noon, so immersed in the river, that little but their noses and the tops of their heads are visible; sometimes they slide fairly into it, and have to be rescued by the owner, who, plunging in, directs their heads against the

rapid current, until they regain a footing. The ass, which in Egypt is far superior in size and spirit to the neglected breed in Europe, is used for riding by the lower orders of the natives, as well as by all Europeans who are not in the employ of government.

While we thus find on the banks of the Nile animals not represented in the ancient sculptures, we find, on the other hand, that some plants conspicuous there have disappeared. Such is the rose-coloured lotus, the beautiful form of which suggested the elegant shafts and capitals of the columnar architecture; and the invaluable papyrus, the *paper* of the ancient Egyptians. This disappearance has led to the belief that these and other plants found even now in Egypt, were not indigenous in the lower Nile valley, but brought down the Nile from above Ethiopia, or elsewhere, by the former inhabitants of the country.

Whence indeed came the ancient Egyptians themselves, and who are their descendants? are questions which have led to much discussion, and are by no means settled at the present day. The results of an examination of one hundred Egyptian crania, collected from different parts of Egypt, furnished by Mr. G. Gliddon to Dr. S. G. Morton of Philadelphia, seemed to establish that the predominant race was Caucasian in origin: out of fifty-five skulls, the *Pelasgic*, or purest type, being ten; the *Egyptian*, which differs from the former in having a narrower and more receding forehead, and the facial angle more prominent, thirty; and the remainder of a mixed and Negroid type of African derivation. This view of the Asiatic origin of the great race who settled in Egypt, might seem to be confirmed by the apparent progress of civilization from north to south, up the valley of the Nile, and by the fact that the most ancient monuments are found in Lower Egypt. Mr. Morton is said, however, to have altered his views, and to lean to the theory of an indigenous African race in the Nile valley, though in the course of ages a certain degree of modifica-

tion would take place by fusion with the different races who conquered Egypt—the Ethiopians, the Greeks and Romans, and the Arabians. This view is after all perhaps the most probable, for in all the sculptures there is more or less of a decidedly African type. The Copts are generally considered to be the most direct descendants of the ancient Egyptians; while others, Dr. Morton, for instance, regard the present Fellahs as more justly entitled to this distinction. The opinion of an Ethiopian and not an Asiatic origin for the Egyptians and their civilization, has been maintained by many scholars; and in accordance with this belief the pyramids of Meroe have been cited as earlier than those of Memphis, but recent examination has rectified this erroneous impression.

After passing the fork of the Delta, where the Damietta branch of the Nile joins that of Rosetta, and the spot where the works of the 'barrage,' or plan for damming up the waters of the Nile, so as more effectually to irrigate the Delta, are now in operation, we first caught sight of the mighty pyramids. How familiar and yet how strange they appeared—hovering afar in dusky grandeur upon the edge of the yellow Libyan desert—overlooking the green valley of the Nile! Like the first far-off glimpse of the Alps, it is a sensation there is no describing nor forgetting. And soon after, ages apart as it were from these memorials of the early Egyptian kings, the fantastic minarets of Cairo, built by the Arab conquerors of their fallen empire, peeped forth, on the other side of the river, from amidst a luxuriant mass of palm-groves and gardens, answering in every respect to our conceptions of a perfect oriental city, a few new factories built by Mehemet Ali being the only signs of modern innovation. Passing the pasha's villa at Shoubra, connected with the capital by a fine avenue of trees, we soon reached the busy quays of Boulak, the port of Cairo. The shore was lined with kiosques and coffee-houses full of indolent smokers, and crowds of camels and asses with most vociferous drivers. Vast heaps of corn, the wealth of the

Nile valley, lay upheaped ready for shipment, warehousing being unnecessary in this dry soil and clime. An immense number of barks, from the heavy Djerms, or cargo boats, to the light and graceful Kangias for passengers, lined the alluvial bank, or flitted up and down the river. Into the midst of these we thrust our pointed prow, got out our chattels, and, after much angry uproar, got them loaded upon a camel; which business being at length happily over, I mounted a donkey, and galloped through the suburbs to Cairo.

CHAPTER III.

CAIRO.—SITUATION.—CHARACTERISTICS.—STREETS.—BAZAARS.—ARABIAN MONUMENTS.—MOSQUES.—GATES, TOMBS, AND PRIVATE DWELLINGS.

HERE then we are in "the Great Al Cairo," as Milton calls it, the city of Saladin and of the Arabian Nights, creations which, once so fanciful and visionary, seem to kindle into life and reality as we gaze upon every object that surrounds us. The apartment we sit in is decorated with mysterious arabesque lattices instead of glass windows; ample luxurious divans heaped with cushions, replace our stiff chairs and sofas; instead of the roll of coaches and the sound of bells, we hear but the solemn and mournful invocation to prayer from the balcony of some minaret, or the wild, shrill, guttural cries of the Arabian women accompanying a marriage or a funeral. Every sight and every sound reminds us that we are in the midst of a different race and different manners—associated with our earliest and most romantic impressions.

The characteristic difference, as it seems to me, between Eastern and Western life, is the comparatively unalterable nature of the former. The population of our own land are constantly modified by the changes of a flexible and advancing civilization. We look back two hundred years like antiquaries, to wonder at our picturesque ancestors. But the civilization and customs of the East, and the religion of the Koran, admitting no light from the growth of liberty or the diffusion of science, seem comparatively unsusceptible of change or modification; and having once attained a fixed type, remain until the

force of outward events brings about their inevitable downfal. Thus, though there may be a diminution of wealth, Cairo is, in all substantial respects, what it was at the first, and we seem to be looking back into the ages of Arabian power and splendour. What we now see of European life in this city, is rather, in truth, an accidental excrescence imposed from without, than any intrinsic alteration in the habits and manners of the people themselves.

That Cairo is essentially an Arabian city, will appear from a few brief notices abridged from Wilkinson, of its history, and consequently that of Egypt itself, under the Saracens and their successors. Egypt, as stated in the Historical Introduction, was conquered from the Byzantine emperors by Amer, in 638, A. D. After taking the Roman Babylon, he founded near it a city and mosque, of which the arches are *round*, at Fostat or Old Cairo, on the banks of the Nile. Under the sway of the Ommiade and Abasside caliphs, the history of the province of Egypt presents no facts of striking interest. In 868, Tooloon, governor of Egypt under the caliph, having thrown off his allegiance, and made himself master of the country, built eastward of Fostat a palace and mosque, which may be called the original nucleus of Cairo, and, with the surrounding quarter, is now enclosed within its walls. This mosque is distinguished as being among the earliest specimens of the *pointed* arch, and as presenting the characteristics of early Arabian architecture. Tooloon's dynasty was but of short duration. El Moez, leader of the Fatimites, who had established a dynasty on the coast of Africa, despatched his general, Goher, to invade Egypt, upon succeeding in which attempt he founded, in 923, the present city of Cairo, still further eastward of the mosque and quarter of Tooloon. Hereupon Moez established his residence at the new capital, which he delighted to beautify, and to him is due the original foundation of the venerable college of El Azhar. Passing over a long list of Egyptian Fatimite governors and their intrigues, we come at length to the era of the crusades and of Saladin, the

only great name connected with the annals of Cairo. He was the nephew of Shirkook, who, urging Noor-e-din, the Abasside caliph, to wrest Egypt from the Fatimites, eventually, through his assistance, obtained virtual possession of the country for himself. Hereupon Noor-e-din sought in every way to dispossess him and his nephew, who, after the death of Shirkook, had succeeded to the post of vizir. This caliph, however, dying shortly after, Saladin openly threw off the yoke, and rendered himself the independent sovereign of Egypt and Syria. We need not dwell upon his well-known and glorious career; suffice it to say, that he added largely to the city of Cairo, which, to insure against attack, he also surrounded with a stronger wall, enclosing the rocky spur of Mount Mokattam as a citadel. The city then assumed its present shape, although greatly beautified by the erections of subsequent rulers. Melek Adel, brother of Saladin, and hardly less valiant, to whom Richard Cœur de Lion proposed to give his sister in marriage, deposed his infant grandson, and seized upon the sovereignty, but died in a few years, on account, it is supposed, of the successes of the Christians, who had landed in Egypt and invaded Damietta. That place being at length taken, the crusaders advanced upon Cairo, but were cut off from supplies and obliged to capitulate. Still more disastrous was the issue of the sixth crusade, when Louis IX. was taken prisoner. Cairo 'the victorious' was never designed to fall into the hands of the crusaders. The Aioobite dynasty, that of the family of Saladin, was at length supplanted by the Baharite Memlooks, a valiant race of foreign and military slaves, who rose against their masters. "A more unjust and absurd constitution cannot be devised," says Gibbon, "than that which condemns the natives of a country to perpetual servitude under the arbitrary dominion of strangers and slaves. The most illustrious sultans of the Baharite (Tartar) and Borgite (Circassian) dynasties were themselves promoted from the Tartar and Circassian bands; and the four and twenty beys, or military chiefs, have

ever been succeeded not by their sons, but by their servants. With some breathing intervals of peace and order, the two dynasties are marked as a period of rapine and bloodshed, but their throne, however shaken, reposed on the two pillars of discipline and valour; their sway extended over Egypt, Nubia, Arabia, and Syria, their Mamelukes were multiplied from eight hundred to twenty-five thousand horse, and their numbers were increased by a provincial militia of one hundred and seven thousand foot, and the occasional aid of sixty-six thousand Arabs." This powerful dynasty has now passed away, leaving but a great name in history, and a group of beautiful tombs fast falling into irretrievable ruin. The Baharite sultans, Baybers and Kalaoon, played a glorious part in the history of the crusades, the taking of Acre under the son of the latter resulting in a final abandonment of Syria by the Christian knights. Meanwhile Saracenic architecture appears to have gradually attained its highest degree of perfection, for to this period belongs the beautiful mosque of Sultan Hassan, and the tombs of the Circassian Memlooks. This dynasty supplanted the Baharite in 1382. The first of them, Sultan Berkook, was distinguished for his valour. El Ashraf Kaitbay in his turn made head against the growing power of the Turks, and obliged Sultan Bajazet to conclude a peace. The rule of the Circassian Memlooks was brought at length to a close by the defeat of Ghoreeh, and his successor, Toman Bey, by the Turkish sultan Selim, who, though he abolished the sovereignty, left, however, the Memlook aristocracy in conditional possession of Egypt. With the fall of the Memlook sultans terminates the historical interest of Cairo; for the intrigues of their successors, until extirpated by Mehemet Ali, would be both tedious and unprofitable in a work of this light texture. Such is a brief sketch of the long period during which Arabian architecture grew up from extreme simplicity to the highest state of enrichment, while the Gothic was making similar progress in our own country and throughout Europe.

Cairo has been well described as occupying the natural centre of Egypt. Heliopolis was only five miles below, and the site of Memphis not more than ten miles above the present capital. The position commands the approaches to Upper Egypt, and is upon the direct and natural thoroughfare between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. It is at present nearly three miles from the Nile, a branch of which however formerly flowed much nearer to it, and about twelve miles south of the upper or southern termination of the Delta. There the river is divided into two channels, through which its waters flow into the Mediterranean, one diverging to the north-west, the other to the north-east, thus giving a triangular form to the alluvial region below. Cairo is chiefly built upon the alluvial plain of the Nile, but the eastern part of the city rests upon the lower declivity of Mount Makattam, a part of the long range which separates Egypt from the Desert of the Red Sea. Thus while from its northern and western gates you issue forth at once into the luxuriant verdure of the Delta, from its southern and eastern you plunge as suddenly into an arid wilderness.

Thus much for the general situation. The city itself is the most completely Arabian one existing, having never received any foreign additions, unless by the Turks, though modern innovations are daily robbing it more and more of that character. It is walled round and defended by a citadel on the towering crags of Mount Mokattam. Within, though here and there is an open square, it is one maze of narrow tortuous lanes; the widest, with few exceptions, being barely sufficient to allow two laden camels to pass abreast—the narrowest scarcely one. Some quarters are almost forsaken. The mosques are thickly sown, and minarets in almost countless number spring up lustrously into the cloudless sky. The crowd is incessant, and the variety of costumes and character very curious. The bulk of the population are Moslem Arabians, with a handful of Turks, and a considerable number of Christian Copts,

A STREET IN CAIRO.

a few Jews, and, as at Alexandria, a mixture of Europeans.

We enter Cairo from Boulak by the great irregular square of the Esbequeeh, surrounded by houses and gardens. On one side extends the Copt quarter, gloomy and forbidding in its exterior as the people whom it harbours: on the other is that of the Franks; here the most conspicuous object is the great 'Oriental Hotel,' called into existence by the requirements of the overland passengers. Hence we follow a winding way into the heart of the city. On the right, at a short distance, is a new mad-house; which, thanks to European influences upon the naturally humane feelings of Mehemet Ali, has replaced the old 'Morostan,' with its horrors, which was so long a standing subject for description with Egyptian tourists. Here the streets get narrower and narrower, till we reach the penetralia of the city. Our illustration will convey a very fair idea of a Cairo street and of the throng that pours through it. As usual, in these narrow lanes, the lower part is in shadow. From a private garden a palm-tree, as is often the case, overhangs the narrow passage. The style of the houses, like that of our own old cities in the middle ages, consists of successive stories of latticed windows, overlying one another to the topmost story, till in the gloomy Jewish quarter they actually meet and *interclasp* one another. These lattices are so contrived as to admit a free view of the passengers, while those within are concealed from their most prying scrutiny. Over the door is generally some inscription of a religious character. On the left side of the view is one of the smaller 'Sibeels,' or public fountains, very numerous in oriental cities, and often originating in the private benevolence of the Mussulmen. A peripatetic beggar, blind of one eye, is regaling himself with a glass of the pure element, and several girls are bearing jars for a supply. This group was sketched exactly as it stands, and is a fair sample of those that continually throng the 'Sibeel;' for in a thirsty clime, like that of Egypt, water is the greatest

of all luxuries. Whoever pleases, says Olin, ascends the two or three steps from the street, takes a metal cup through an aperture in the gilt iron work, and drinks his fill; the cup, however, being fastened by a chain just long enough to allow the Arab to quench his thirst, without indulging another of his propensities quite as strong, and hardly less general. In the centre of the view is an Arabian lady "riding the high ass," as Mrs. Poole calls it; she is seated after the manner of men upon a lofty upbuilt saddle covered with the richest carpets. The ass which she bestrides is one of the largest size, very carefully groomed, and full of spirit and vivacity, with an eye like a gazelle's, quite realizing the "Sprightly" of the Arabian Nights. It is gaily adorned with tassels and trappings, and conducted through the press of the throng by a stout well-dressed servant. The lady herself is enveloped in a wrapper of rich black silk, which disguises her whole person, leaving only the face, which is half covered by a white muslin veil, concealing all but the lustrous dark eyes, which seem to thrill through you in the dusky obscurity of the street. Sometimes you encounter a whole harem thus mysteriously equipped, when the passengers studiously avert their looks, and carefully stand against the side walls to make way for them. Behind the lady advances a huge camel, laden with enormous burdens, which fairly clears the causeway. An encounter with one of these animals is indeed anything but agreeable. Sometimes he is laden with water skins, wet and dripping upon the earth, sometimes with baskets of large square stones, and what is worst of all, with long dangling beams of timber which droop down and scrape the walls on either side. Heedless of all obstruction, on he stalks with his slow, rolling, not unmajestic gait, leaving it to the rest of the passengers to accommodate themselves to his gyrations as they are best able,—not to be effected without much dexterity, and withal an occasional tumble. In addition to the aristocratic lady seen in the view, are some of the lower ranks on foot. Their gait and general

appearance is majestic, but they will not bear close inspection. Their early beauty soon gives place to positive ugliness. Moreover, they tattoo their hands, arms, faces, and bosoms, and blacken, as indeed do all the women, their eye-lashes with 'kohl.' Their dress is a long simple wrapper of blue, or a species of plaid, very loosely hanging about them, and open at the bosom. It is often ludicrous enough, says Olin, to observe the studied care with which a girl covers her face with a fragment of a veil, or the corners of her tattered robe, while with the other she raises her drapery in the freest possible manner. Nothing seems to be regarded as a breach of modesty if the *face* be covered. To display that is regarded as an open proof of the abandonment of virtue.

Our blind beggar is but a type of a class unhappily very numerous in Egypt. I have remarked that this class of men in the East have often a nobleness and resignation stamped upon their features which is quite touching; the closing of the visual organs with which they commune with the external world, appear, as it were, to quicken their spiritual sense, and they seem as though they felt nearer to God, and more immediately dependent on his providence, than others. They are, if totally blind, generally led about by some poor boy, and in Constantinople they are always seated at the gates of the mosques. They are treated with great respect by the Mussulmen, who, with that reverent spirit that runs through all their actions, regard every visitation of providence as entitling its object to their peculiar sympathy. Throughout Egypt the number of blind or half blind persons is positively startling. Various causes have been adduced for this; the continual glare of the sun, the subtle impalpable dust, which we have already enumerated as one of the prominent plagues of Egypt, and, as others think, the transition from the dry air to the moist vapours of the Nile. To these causes may be added the total want of precaution or common cleanliness. And as if the number of the blind from natural causes were insufficient, the

iron rule of Mehemet Ali has tended to increase it. In the hope of escaping the ruthless conscription by which the pasha recruited his armies, parents were led to deprive their children of one of their eyes. The pasha, however, was not to be balked of his prey, and, at the suggestion, it is said, of one of those Frank advisers, who sharpen by the Machiavelian expedients of European intellect the lawless cruelty of oriental despotism, these unfortunate wretches, with a refinement of cruel irony, were organized into a one-eyed corps!

Through a labyrinth of these narrow streets we advance into the Bazaars. These, in an oriental city, are the great gathering place of the population, the centre of traffic, the seat of flying rumours, and the lurking place of secret conspiracies. They consist of one main avenue running through the centre of the city, with endless and intricate branches, generally covered, and some of them sunk into a twilight obscurity. The crowd that pours through them is incessant. Each trade has its separate 'sook' or quarter, and there are numerous 'Wekalehs' or Khans, for the reception of merchandise, large courts opening from the bazaars, surrounded with buildings, and defended by strong gates, which are kept closed at night. The whole scene is marvellously original; every turn presents us with a fresh picture of oriental life and manners. Indeed, to wander at random about these bazaars is one of the most delightful things I am acquainted with. Charles Lamb remarks, that in his dreams he used to ramble through all the cities of the East, to mingle with their strange and turbaned crowds, with a sense of vivid delight quite indescribable. Something of this singular intoxication is experienced by him who for the first time visits the streets of Cairo.

I have selected for representation a group sketched on the spot, at the door of a coffee-house. At a well-frequented corner sits a Jewish money-changer, whose sordid dress, black turban, and reddish hair, mark him out as one of that despised but still most influential race, who often, in Eastern as in Western

THE BAZAAR

lands, have moved in unsuspected obscurity the vital springs of the social and political machine. To ply his money-getting functions for the day he has issued from his quarter, the most horrible in Cairo, the narrowest, foulest, and most confined, and bearing in its ponderous and strong barred gates, evidence of the painful insecurity of its detested yet envied inhabitants. He is engaged in transactions with a Turk, in which he will probably come off somewhat the gainer. The coffee-shop where he has planted himself is a fair sample of the very numerous ones which are found in every corner of the capital. They are small and without decoration, but the coffee, as prepared at the best of them, has, to the genuine amateur, an aroma not excelled, if equalled, in the first of Parisian cafés. Coffee and pipes are at once the universal stimuli as well as sedatives of the Orientals. Nothing can be got through without their influence. Besides what is consumed at the café, the negro servants may be seen all day long carrying to and fro small cups to the shopkeepers of the bazaars. A raised seat serves for the coffee customers; here they sit and smoke, and here is often seen assembled a group listening to the tale of a musician, who chants to them some ancient fragment of Arabian romance. The style of smoking is generally with the long straight cherry-stick pipe, which is very elegantly adorned with silk and tassels; but some, like the figure in the sketch, prefer the more recherché Narghileh, consisting of a long flexible tube, inserted in a glass vase of water, somewhat softening the narcotic inhalation. The back-ground displays one of the gates enclosing a particular part of the bazaar, through which and across the main avenue is a perspective into one of the aforesaid Wekalehs or Khans, with its interior courts, and a flitting phantasmagoria of caftaned and turbaned merchants.

It was while standing to draw this coffee-shop, that I was struck by the appearance of a stranger, who alighted from his horse for a few moments on some matter of business with a

neighbouring shopkeeper. He answered remarkably well to Falstaff's description of himself—"a good portly man, i' faith, and a corpulent, of a cheerful look, a pleasing eye, and a most noble carriage, and, as I think, his age some fifty, or by'r Lady, inclining to threescore." But it was his costume which peculiarly distinguished him from the surrounding throng. It was, in fact, the old costume of the murdered Mamelukes, the heavy turban, and voluminous inexpressibles, the cloth of which alone would have furnished forth a suit for any ordinary European. The materials were costly, and the entire effect strikingly picturesque, and even gorgeous. His mien and garb bespoke him no ordinary personage, and I gazed on him with curiosity and interest, but it was not for some time afterwards that I ascertained who he really was. His name I found was Suleyman Agha, and he may well be called the "last of the Mamelukes," at least of those who formerly held possession of Cairo. His story is very curious. He was, it seems, a personal friend of Mehemet Ali, at the time when the latter had secretly resolved upon the extermination of his Mamelukes, who, as he knew, were planning to cut him off. The manner of their destruction is probably known to the reader. The ceremony of the investiture of Toossoon Pasha with the command of an army served as the pretext for drawing them within the walls of the citadel, whence it was determined that they should never return alive. The snare was laid, the agents of destruction ready. The principal Mamelukes repaired for the last time in all their splendour to the fortress, and paid their congratulations to the pasha; then turned to take their leave. But the gates had been closed, and from every corner of the building a fire of musketry was opened upon them, till man and horse lay heaped in one promiscuous carnage. One indeed, and one only escaped, by leaping his horse over the wall at a spot where he had remarked a mound of rubbish; the horse was killed, but his rider succeeded in making his way out of the city. Meanwhile such of the Mamelukes who remained below were put to

death, and their houses sacked. When all was over, the pasha, who had not dared to intrust his favourite with the dangerous secret of his designs, deeply concerned at the loss of his Mameluke friend, was lamenting his supposed death, when, to his surprise and joy, he suddenly appeared before him. Scarcely could Mehemet Ali believe his eyes, or sufficiently express his satisfaction, and he hastily inquired by what means Suleyman Agha had effected his escape from that terrible scene of carnage. The Mameluke told him that he had disguised himself as a woman; but this was too much for his Highness's belief; the portly frame and manly countenance of the Agha seemed to render such a metamorphosis impossible, and he frankly expressed his incredulity. Of this at the time the Mameluke took no notice, but several days afterwards there appeared before his Highness a woman, clothed in the usual blue robe of the lower class of Arab females, with the long white veil concealing all but the eyes. She came to make a complaint against her husband, upon whose wrongs towards her she entered with all the volubility of a Caireen female. The case was clear, the judgment given in her favour, and a punishment ordered for the delinquent husband; when the supposed sufferer, throwing up her veil, inquired of the pasha if he was at length satisfied. It was no other than his old friend Suleyman. Great merriment ensued upon this eclaircissement, and the sole survivor of his slaughtered brethren has ever since been on the most cordial terms both with the pasha and the principal personages of Cairo.

In the foreground of this view is seen a donkey-driver with his beast; being, in fact, a portrait of the little familiar who habitually conveyed me about the city and its environs, and served me too in the office of a Cicerone. I have spoken of the admirable qualities of the Egyptian ass, of its strength, and spirit; the difficulty, at least in the crowded streets of Cairo, being rather to restrain its rapid movements, which often bring one into peril of collision with a veiled lady or a loaded

camel. The Caireen donkey-boy is quite a character, and mine in particular was a perfect original. He was small and spare of frame, his rich brown face relieved by the whitest of teeth and the most brilliant black eyes; and his face beamed with a merry yet roguish expression, like that of the Spanish or rather Moorish boy in Murillo's well-known master-piece, with whom he was probably of cognate blood. Living in the streets from infancy, and familiar with all the chances of out-door life, and with every description of character; waiting at the door of a mosque or a café, or crouching in a corner of the bazaar, he had acquired a thorough acquaintance with Caireen life; and his intellect, and I fear his vices, had become somewhat prematurely developed. But the finishing touch to his education was undoubtedly given by the European travellers whom he had served, and of whom he had, with the imitativeness of his age, picked up a variety of little accomplishments, particularly the oaths of different languages. His audacity had thus become consummate, and I have heard him send his fellows to ——— as coolly and in as good English as any prototype of our own metropolis. His Mussulman prejudices sat very loosely upon him, and in the midst of religious observances he grew up indifferent and prayerless. With this inevitable laxity of faith and morals, contracted by his early vagabondage, he at least acquired an emancipation from prejudice, and displayed a craving after miscellaneous information, to which his European masters were often tasked to contribute. Thrown almost in childhood upon their own resources, the energy and perseverance of these boys is remarkable. My little lad had, for instance, been up the country with some English travellers, in whose service he had saved four or five hundred piastres, (£4 or £5,) with which he bought the animal which I bestrode, on whose sprightliness and good qualities he was never tired of expatiating, and with the proceeds of whose labour he supported his mother and himself. He had but one habitual subject of discontent, the heavy tax imposed upon his donkey by Mehemet Ali, upon

whom he invoked the curse of God, a curse, it is to be feared, uttered not loud but deep by all classes save the employés of government. His wind and endurance were surprising; he would trot after his donkey by the hour together, urging and prodding it along with a pointed stick, as readily in the burning sandy environs, and under the noon-day sun, as in the cool and shady alleys of the crowded capital; running, dodging, striking, and shouting with all the strength of his lungs through the midst of its labyrinthine obstructions.

The water-carrier (to the left of the donkey-boy) is an old familiar figure, met with at every corner in Cairo. Notwithstanding the supply at the fountains, the purer element from the Nile is brought upon camels and asses into the city, and retailed in the manner here represented.

The Caireen shopman is utterly unlike the same character in a western metropolis. He does but little business, and is in no sort of hurry over it; he has, indeed, some difficulty to kill the time, even with the aid of pipe and prayers. Here is no fear of "tremendous competition," and no danger of an "early closing movement." Every thing jogs on in its old appointed way. The shopman takes his seat on his little carpet in the front of his open shop, fills his pipe, and smokes on steadily. Does a customer approach? another pipe is presented and filled, and at intervals between the puffs, the negociation is gradually carried forward. The vender begins by asking too much, and the purchaser by offering too little, and by the time the pipe is ended the difference is adjusted, and the bargain concluded "in the name of God." When the sonorous and somewhat mournful cry of the Muezzin thrills from the gallery of some neighbouring minaret through the dusky recesses of the bazaars, the shopkeeper arises, and unconscious of, or at all events indifferent to observation, goes reverentially through the appointed round of prayer and praise. At intervals, perhaps, having no newspaper to keep him alive, he retails with his neighbour, or with a casual passenger, the rumours of the

passing hour; or, overcome with drowsiness, takes a quiet nap upon his shopboard. A dish of 'kabobs,' pieces of mutton seasoned with herbs, cut small, and cooked on a spit, a glass of water from the itinerant vender, or a cup of coffee from the nearest shop, constitute his daily repast. And thus he contrives to wear away the listless hours till sun-down.

From the bazaars, by many a dim and winding street, there is a gradual ascent to the citadel, which stands on a bold spur of the bare sandstone mountain, through which indeed the road is partly cut. The walls are solid, and in some places from fifty to one hundred feet high. Passing through its entrance court, we come upon a terrace commanding one of the grandest prospects in the world. Cairo, with its countless number of carved domes and fantastic minarets, is taken in at a glance. To the eastward, in a secluded valley separated from the city, the long range of the tombs of the Memlook sultans stretches into the distant desert towards Suez. On the south extends the dense verdure of the Delta, a dark green streak which comes up abruptly to the edge of the yellow sands. There stood Heliopolis, the most learned city of Egypt, and there yet stands its obelisk, upon which Abraham, may have gazed with curiosity as he entered that wonderful land. But it is to the westward that the chief glories of the scene expand; the long range of the dusky pyramids, from the nearer ones of Ghizeh to those of Sakhara and Dashoor, standing in sublime serenity above the site of vanished Memphis, sole but most glorious relics of the pride and power of the early Egyptian kings of Lower Egypt; pointing backward from an antiquity already hoary, through a long and dim vista of unknown monarchs, towards the unknown origin of civilization. They stand on the rocky edge of the boundless Libyan desert, overlooking the verdant valley of the Nile, with its variegated crops and scattered palm-groves and villages. Advancing nearer to the city, on the banks of the river peep up the minarets of Fostat or Old Cairo, marking the advent of another

Cairo & the Valley of the Nile

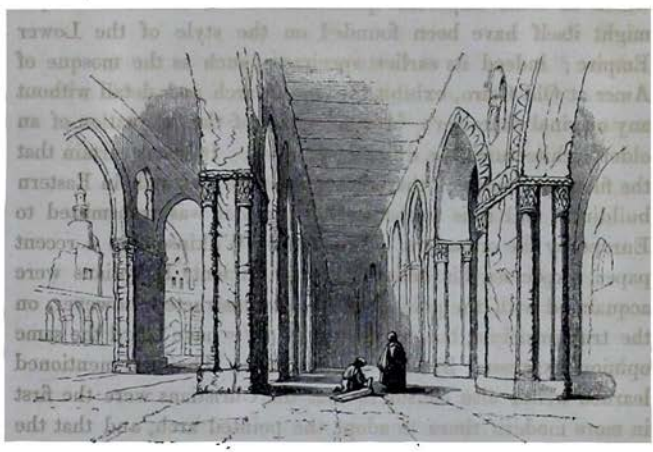
race, founded by the Arabs who conquered Egypt from the Byzantine emperors. The solid wall of the Roman fort which so long resisted their efforts, is confounded with the surrounding buildings and groves. The luxuriant island of Rhoda is half made out, and nearer at hand those portions of the city, which were successively added by later Arabian dynasties, as it gradually receded from the river, and took up its final position under the shelter of the Mokattam crags. Conspicuous in this now half-ruinous quarter is seen a large square court with a dome and minaret of singular formation, fast falling into decay. This is the mosque of Tooloon, the founder of a separate dynasty, it is remarkable as one of the earliest specimens of the pointed arch; and, to close this description, which is running too much into diffuse detail, immediately below is the noblest mosque in the city, built some centuries later, when Arabian architecture had attained its highest degree of enrichment, by Hassan, a sultan of the Baharite Memlook dynasty. It is a landscape not only indescribably splendid to the eye, especially when the sun is sinking behind the pyramids, and flinging long rays of ruby lustre aslant the Nile valley, to rest for a brief half hour on the craggy crest of the citadel, and the arabesque fretwork of the lofty minarets; but its soil is the strand of ages, upon which successive races, from Sesostris to Saladin, like wave chasing wave, have left the monumental traces of their passage; monuments too the more imperishable as they recede further into the night of antiquity.

To the traveller not merely anxious to despatch the "sights" of Cairo, under the guidance of a loquacious Cicerone; to the lover of art in all its variety of characteristic invention, in which the sense of the beautiful is developed in accordance with the peculiar religion or social system of a people; Cairo will present a peculiar attraction from its containing, with a few exceptions, the finest specimens of the Arabian architecture in its mosques, tombs, gates, and private houses, to be met with in any oriental city.

It is not easy at present to trace the origin and progress of this original and exquisite style. Like the Christian Gothic, which in some important particulars seems to resemble it, it might itself have been founded on the style of the Lower Empire; indeed its earliest specimens, such as the mosque of Amer at Old Cairo, exhibit the round arch and detail without any original character; bearing marks of the adaptation of an older architecture to a different purpose. It seems certain that the first specimens of the pointed arch are met with in Eastern buildings, and it is probable that the idea was transmitted to Europe by the crusaders. Sir Gardner Wilkinson, in a recent paper, expresses his belief that the ancient Egyptians were acquainted with the pointed arch, not constructed, however, on the true principle, but horizontally. We have heard the same opinion expressed by Mr. Catherwood. The first-mentioned learned writer also considers that the Christians were the first in more modern times to adopt the pointed arch, and that the Moslems copied from them. Be this as it may, these early and perhaps imitative attempts of Arabian architecture, gradually gave place to a style which may justly rank among the most original ever invented. Its different stages may be traced in Cairo, from the plain arches and grave simplicity of the mosque of Tooloon, up to the surpassing elegance of the tombs of the sultans and other monuments. There is one consideration which invests them with peculiar interest, namely, that the most beautiful of them are going rapidly to decay; while a modern and corrupt imitation, entirely without merit, is supplanting the genuine one, retaining merely its leading arrangements, while all the peculiar distinguishing beauties are replaced by the most vapid and tasteless mixture of styles.

In a remote part of the town, formerly without the walls, is the mosque of Tooloon, the most ancient in the city, (already alluded to in the description of the view from the citadel, in which it appears,) at present in a very dilapidated and neglected state. It stands in an extensive open square, surrounded by

cloisters on three sides, consisting of two rows of columns, but on the eastern of five, as appears in the accompanying illustra-



tion. On entering from without we are struck by the grave and noble simplicity, and even elegance of effect; the square piers and flat rooms being relieved by the tasteful arches with their broad decorated border, which does not much resemble the later style called arabesque. It will be observed that the arch partakes of the horse-shoe form, inclining slightly inward. Wilkinson gives the date of this building 879, A. D., observing, that if not remarkable for beauty, it is a monument of the highest interest in the history of architecture, as it proves the existence of the pointed arch about three hundred years before its introduction into England, where that style of building was not in common use until the beginning of the 13th century, and was unknown before the year 1170.

The singular twisted form of the minaret on the other side of the court will be remarked; it has a spiral staircase outside leading to the gallery above. It is said that this originated in

the founder's wish to have it built in the shape of a piece of paper he happened to be twisting. The dome over the fountain in the centre of the area is of later date than the arcades.*

Near the citadel, at the corner of the open square of the Roomaylee, is the mosque of the sultan Hassan, conspicuous on the approach to the city, in some respects certainly the finest in Cairo, though the design is somewhat unequal and incongruous, and neither the dome nor minaret are at all equal in beauty to many smaller specimens; the former somewhat resembling the clumsy style of those of Constantinople, built up with unsightly buttresses, instead of springing up gracefully from its foundation. Of the side next the square, a very good idea may be formed by referring to the view from the citadel in the foreground of which it appears. What is unique, and indeed unequalled, is the magnificent porch and the cornice above it; which, as the spectator comes up through the narrow crowded street, called the Sook e Zullut, 'or arm bazaar,' strikes him with marvellous effect, towering to an amazing height, and displaying in its honeycomb tracery a noble breadth of design, with intricacy and richness of detail, which surpasses every other in the city, fine as some of them are. It is quite impossible to do justice to such a specimen in a small drawing; and besides, the street is so narrow that only a side view can be obtained, yet the accompanying view will in some measure bear out these remarks. A peculiar effect, which cannot be imitated in the engraving, is produced by the black and red marbles with which portions are inlaid. This view also exhibits a very good specimen of the exterior of the houses of the old style, with their open galleries, and the elaborately fretted wood-work of their projecting windows and coverings, which produce a very picturesque effect, with the cafe below, overshaded, as is commonly the case, by an awning. The gateway leads

* See Wilkinson for further details of this mosque.

MOSQUE OF SULTAN HASSAN.

into a Khan. This is the main thoroughfare in the city, yet by taking one of the cane seats of a small café, I was enabled to complete my sketch without the slightest interruption. In the foreground is to be seen one of the sights which the stranger is sure to encounter, however short his stay; a 'zeffeh,' or preliminary marriage procession. The bride, whose dress and person are entirely concealed by a shawl, accompanied by one or two of her relations, advances beneath a gay-coloured canopy of silk, borne by four men; in front is a procession of her female friends, married and unmarried, the latter being distinguished by their white wrappers from the black silk ones worn by the former. The whole is preceded by a party of musicians playing on hautboys and drums, and in the case of the lower orders, accompanied by a peculiar cry of the women, called 'zughareet,' or rolling of the voice, expressive, with trifling modulation, either of joy or sorrow. The bride then repairs to the bath, other ceremonies, some of which are extremely singular,* precede the union, which does not take place until the following night.

The interior of the mosque of Sultan Hassan does not, at least to many, altogether fulfil the promise of the noble portal. A vestibule conducts into an open court, with a fountain, and four recesses covered by as many arches, which attract attention from their unusual size and fine proportion. The recess on the east side as usual is deeper, and is surmounted by the lofty dome. The general aspect is one of severe and somewhat gloomy grandeur. Many are the legends connected with it.

A curious contrast to the lofty entrance of the mosque of Hassan, the type of the greater number in the city, is presented by the gateway to the mosque of the Azhar, which will remind one, in many respects, of the Gothic portals of western Europe, though the detail is very dissimilar. There is another one at the opposite extremity of this extensive enclosure, which is almost entirely surrounded by houses, through which are

* See Lane.

narrow passages leading into the interior of the building, peeping through which, (for all entrance is, under ordinary circumstances, interdicted to Frank travellers,) a view is obtained into the pillared avenues within, where in cool shadow are seen, lounging or flitting about, such a collection of Mussulmen from all parts of the East, in their varied costume, as strongly, although hopelessly, tempted my curiosity. I longed to mingle with so strange a congregation of gownsmen. This is considered the principal college of the East, and to receive the instructions of its professors in Arabian literature, students repair from all quarters, who are gratuitously supported. The funds of this establishment having been, like all the property belonging to the mosques, seized by the pasha, are so much reduced that the professors have no longer any salary, and thus a heavy blow and great discouragement to the influence of the old Mussulman system of education, necessarily fettered by the dogmas of the Koran, has been dealt, the effect of which will probably be heightened by the introduction of European languages and ideas into the pasha's own schools. Indeed, the pious old Mussulman justly regards these as the 'last days' of Islam. To this college is attached an establishment for blind men, mostly students, who are described as peculiarly fanatical. Before the reduction of the revenues of this establishment, its charities were very great, and its walls afforded shelter to a vast multitude of poor. Mahommedan institutions are on the wane; priests and professors, pillaged of their revenues, are sunk into sordid indigence, and zeal alarmingly on the decrease.

The scene within the enclosure of this singular maze of buildings must be very striking. In going the round of the interior, says one who was privileged to explore it, "we found ourselves in the company of the people of Mecca or Medina, then in the midst of Syrians, in another minute among Muslims of Central Africa, next amidst Moggrebyns or natives of Northern Africa west of Egypt, then with European and Asiatic Turks, and quitting these we were introduced to Persians and

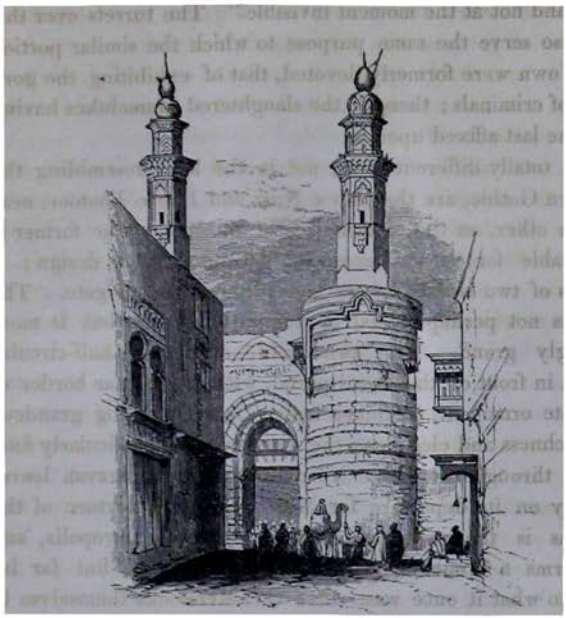
ENTRANCE TO THE EL AZHAR

Muslims of India. We were much affected by seeing many of the blind paupers who are supported at the mosque, bent double by age, slowly walking through the avenues of columns, knowing from habit every turn and every passage, and looking like the patriarchs of the assembled multitude."

It is said that no less than forty thousand individuals partook of the bounties of this establishment, and that on every alternate day three thousand eight hundred pounds of bread, and a quantity of oil for the lamps, were distributed.

Outside, at the door of the mosque, is represented a group of donkeys with the 'Seis,' or groom, awaiting the return of some Arabian ladies from performing their devotions. A little boy is seen with his school-board, an old pilgrim is emerging from the sacred courts, and groups of students are lounging or reading the Koran within the shady retirement of the cloisters.

The gates of Cairo, no less than the mosques and tombs, are among its noble specimens of Arabian architecture, and each has a peculiar aspect and physiognomy of its own. The Bab Zooayleh is now in the interior of the city, which, after the time of Saladin, was extended up to the citadel, so as to embrace the Kalat el Kebsh, or palace of Sultan Tooloon, near the ancient mosque already described. At present this gate stands in the most bustling and crowded part of the bazaar, at the intersection of the main avenue with another principal street, and with the adjacent mosque, whose elegant minarets rest upon it as a basement, and are among the most striking ornaments of this very picturesque portion of the city. The gateway itself bears so remarkable a resemblance to the Gothic portals of castles and towns in our own country, especially at York, that it might be supposed that the one had originated the other. Mr. Lane gives a curious account of a superstition connected with this gate, which is said to be one of the spots haunted by the Kutb, or most holy of the Welees, or saints of such high sanctity, that although not disembodied, and of the humblest appearance and garb, they are invested with certain super-



natural powers, though undiscernible save to some chosen few. "One leaf of its great wooden door, which is never shut, turned back against the eastern side of the interior of the gateway, conceals a small vacant space, which is said to be the place of the Kutb. Many persons, on passing by it, recite the Fáthah, and some give alms to a beggar who is generally seated there, and who is regarded by the vulgar as one of the servants of the Kutb. Numbers of persons afflicted with head-ache drive a nail into the door, to charm away the pain, and many sufferers from the tooth-ache extract a tooth, and insert it in a crevice of the door, or fix it in some other way, to insure their not being attacked again by the same malady. Some curious individuals often try to peep behind the door, in the vain hope of catching a glimpse of the Kutb, should he happen to be

there, and not at the moment invisible." The turrets over this gate also serve the same purpose to which the similar portion of our own were formerly devoted, that of exhibiting the gory heads of criminals; those of the slaughtered Mamelukes having been the last affixed upon it.

In a totally different style, not in the least resembling the Western Gothic, are the Bab e Nusr and Bab e Footoor, near to each other, on the eastern side of the city. The former is remarkable for its chasteness of decoration and design; it consists of two square towers and a round-headed gate. The latter is not perhaps equal to it in this respect, but is more strikingly grand. The two bold, advanced, half-circular towers, in front of the broad portal, with its singular border of elaborate ornament, combines massive and imposing grandeur with richness and elegance; the masonry too is particularly fine.

It is through the Bab e Nusr that the great caravan leaves the city on its departure for Mecca. This departure of the pilgrims is the principal spectacle of the metropolis, and still forms a scene of rude fantastic splendour, but far inferior to what it once was, when the Memlooks themselves in their splendid costume, so ill replaced by the more modern but convenient dress, accompanied it forth with barbaric pomp and high solemnity. In the course of my subsequent wanderings, I was fortunate enough to meet with it on its march in the midst of the desert, where it is of course a far more impressive spectacle.

Among the four hundred mosques in the city, many of which are in a state of decay, other beautiful specimens may be met with, but perhaps the utmost perfection and variety of this style of architecture seems to have been reached in the tombs, which are scattered without the walls on the south and east. Emerging from the crowded city by the Bab e Nusr, or Gate of Victory, the desert stretches from the very walls into the trembling haze of distance, and its dead and silent expanse receives an additional mournfulness of aspect from the ceme-

teries which glitter and whiten in the burning sun, unshadowed by shrub or tree; some with their gilt and gaily turbaned head-stones of yesterday's erection; others broken and half filled up with sand. Here the Bedouin, who love not the confinement of walls nor the society of civilized man, establish themselves on their flying visits to the capital, crouching in the shade of the ruinous monuments, and raising their temporary camp on the surrounding sands, in the midst of their recumbent camels. As you advance, the hum of the city, faintly ascending above its walls, dies away upon the ear; high mounds of rubbish conceal the tops of its minarets, and, without enclosure of any kind, backed by hills of an aspect wildly desolate, these beautiful structures "rise like an exhalation" from the blanching waste. None, even the most indifferent, could behold without astonishment such erections in the bare and open wilderness, yet this adds not a little to the funereal impressiveness of the sight; but when we approach, and find how fast oblivion is gathering upon these mouldering memorials of former greatness, and still greater genius, we might almost weep that such a fate must, at no great distance of time, befall monuments, which, in lands more enlightened, would be preserved as precious creations of art, which in their peculiar style have never been surpassed.

The tombs extend for a considerable distance, and but a portion of them can be seen in the annexed illustration; the most remote, quite isolated from the rest, is that of Melek Adel. The distant plains, expanding to the left of this monument, witnessed the final downfal of the Circassian Memlook dynasty, and the conquest of Egypt by the Turks. In the centre of the view is one of the numerous tombs erected to the memory of Sultan El Ghoree, the last but one of this race of military princes. He perished in Syria, in battle against the Ottoman sultan, Selim, who marched immediately upon Egypt. Meanwhile Toman Bey had been elected to fill the place of the unfortunate Ghoree, and prepared to meet the Turks, who,

TOMBS OF THE MEMLOOK SULTANS.

passing his advanced guards, marched directly upon Cairo by the plain of Heliopolis. Here the final encounter took place, the Memlooks, so often victorious, were routed, and their fugitive leader was overtaken and brought back to Cairo, where he was hanged like a common malefactor upon the Bab Zooayleh. Henceforth the Memlook aristocracy subsisted only as dependants upon the Porte, but they still maintained their hereditary prowess, till the strength of their brilliant cavalry was broken against the French squares at the battle of the Pyramids. Finally extinguished by Mehemet Ali, they have left but a romantic name in history, and these beautiful tombs fast mouldering to irretrievable ruin.

Among the largest and most beautiful is that of El Ashraf Aboo-l-Nusr Kaitbay e Zaheree, the nineteenth sultan of the dynasty of the Circassian Memlook kings, who died and was buried there in 1496, A. D.* To this, as to the other tombs, a mosque has been attached, with various appendages, but these establishments are, I believe, ruined, and abandoned to poor Arab families and a solitary Sheik or two, who hover like ghosts about these splendid and mouldering foundations; and the whole neighbourhood seems a resort of wandering Arabs, and of a rude and half savage class of the population, who quarrel fiercely for the few piastres of the occasional visitor. The style of all the tombs is much the same, consisting of a square building, pierced with slender windows, and surmounted by domes, a peculiarity wanting to our Gothic architecture. Nothing can exceed the exquisite proportion of many of these, and the whole wealth of invention seems lavished on the fanciful net-work of arabesque tracery with which they are covered, of which each tomb displays a different pattern. The extraordinary variety of geometrical combination in Saracenic architecture, is one of its peculiar characteristics. Less sombre and imposing than the Gothic, it surpasses it in symmetry and grace. The finest tomb is perhaps this of Sultan

* Wilkinson.

Kaitbay. The lofty minaret, with its successive stages, tapering gracefully to the summit, and connected by galleries, is a beautiful specimen of this unique invention of Mahommedan art in its highest enrichment, and the dome is perhaps unequalled for its graceful proportion and its delicate detail, the whole producing an effect at once grave, elegant, and fanciful; an original combination which no one at all affected by art, nor even one of ruder stamp, can possibly behold without a feeling of exquisite delight.

E. 'Zaher Berkóok, whose ashes repose within another fine mausoleum, was the first of the dynasty of Circassian Memlooks, raised, as Gibbon informs us, by the favour of his military comrades from slavery and imprisonment to the throne of Egypt. He was a conspicuous actor at a stirring and momentous period. The redoubtable Timour had already overran Persia, Tartary, and India, when he was called back from his distant career of conquest by the information he received of the revolt of the Christians of Georgia, and the ambitious designs of the Turkish sultan, Bajazet, whose submission, and that of his Egyptian allies, he required in a tone of haughty and contemptuous menace. Bajazet returned scorn with scorn, while Berkóok "braved the menaces, corresponded with the enemies, and detained the ambassadors of the Mogul. The first engagement at Aleppo was favourable to the arms of Timour, who advanced with his destroying army as far as Damascus, where he was rudely encountered and almost overthrown by the armies of Egypt. A retrograde motion was imputed to his distress and despair: one of his nephews deserted to the enemy, and Syria rejoiced in the tale of his defeat, when the sultan was driven by the revolt of the Mamelukes to escape with precipitation and shame to his palace at Cairo. The check thus received by Timour rolled back awhile from Syria and Egypt the devastating tide of conquest, although the fatal battle of Angora, fought two years afterwards, delivered the Turkish sultan into the hands of the insulting victor;

TOMB OF SULTAN KAITBAY.

Astracan, Carizme, Delhi, Ispahan, Bagdad, Aleppo, Damascus, Smyrna, and a thousand other cities were sacked or burnt, or utterly destroyed, but the timely submission of the Egyptian sultan, together with Timour's experience of the military prowess of the Memlooks and their leader, averted from Cairo the fearful visitation which had befallen so many other famous cities.

To complete this brief sketch of the architecture of Cairo, I proceed to give a general description of the style of building adopted in private dwellings. Coolness, together with that seclusion required by the domestic habits of the Orientals, are the principal points which have been studied in all their arrangements. The foundation-walls are of stone, and the superstructure of brick; the lower windows in those facing the streets are above the line of vision, even of persons on horseback; the windows of the upper stories project into the street, and are carried out and cased externally by wooden lattice work, sufficiently open to admit the air and light, which comes thus softly veiled into the interior, enabling those within to obtain a view into the street without, while they are themselves entirely concealed from the closest scrutiny of passengers, or even opposite neighbours. In addition, these windows are generally shaded by a projecting cornice of carved wood-work, casting deep shadows over the front, of graceful and ornamental patterns, as may be seen in the different views. In the narrower streets these nearly or quite met, but in new houses they are being gradually lessened, while the rich and raised carving is giving place to glass and lattice of a simpler character, so that by degrees the picturesque aspect of the streets will be much impaired. A winding passage usually leads through the ornamented doorway into a court, into which the apartments look, with doors conducting to the harem—the upper apartments, exclusively occupied by the women and children, with the master. In the court is generally "a well of slightly brackish water, which filters through the soil from the Nile; and

on its most shaded side are commonly two water jars, which are daily replenished with Nile water, brought from the river in skins."* There is sometimes also a palm tree.

The principal apartment on the ground-floor is called a Mandárah, and in the older style of houses is often very splendid. I have selected for representation one of unusual size and richness of decoration, in a house formerly occupied, I believe, by one of the murdered Mamelukes, and now abandoned to decay,—not far from the Frank bazaar. It was melancholy to behold its fountains dry, its marble pavement broken up, rich inlayed cabinets and mazy arabesques—such as are not to be met with in these degenerate days, falling to pieces with neglect; the stained glass of its windows broken, the wild herbs of the garden straggling into the apartment, and its unfurnished divans heaped with rubbish; while the spider wrought its web undisturbed among the fantastic intricacies of the tracery. Some dismal story seemed to be connected with it,—one might have fancied it the chosen abode of the Jinns and Efrits of Arabian romance. The entrance, on the right hand, is by the door covered with minute and elaborate carving. The middle part of the room is lower than the rest, and is called a durká'ah, which, with the fountain in the centre, is paved and inlayed with marble of different colours. To the right of this, on the wall, is also a sloping marble slab with stair-like edges, over which the water pours and trickles, thence passing by pipes into the basin of the fountain. This is a common Saracenic device, and I remember to have seen it in Palermo, but is not in use in modern Egyptian houses, at least it is not mentioned by Lane. The raised part of the room is called a "leewán,"† paved with common stone, and covered with mats in summer and carpets in winter; this is unusually extensive in the apartment before us: it is surrounded by a divan, or low seat continued round the walls, covered like a sofa, and with long cushions resting against the wall for the entire length, sometimes with

* Lane. † Lane.

INTERIOR OF A HOUSE

at Cairo.

others in the angles: these are all covered with materials in richly ornamental patterns more or less expensive. The roofing of the "leewan," as will be observed, is supported by carved beams, which with the intervening flat space are decorated and gilt in the richest manner. Of the windows, some are glazed, and are richly ornamented with stained glass, representing flowers, fruits, and fanciful objects; others, looking into the verdure of the garden, have simply open lattice or iron work. A remarkable and picturesque peculiarity is the decorated lantern above the fountain, made to open and shut at pleasure by means of a string, serving for the admission of air. A common device for this object is a sloping shed of boards above an opening seen on the roofs of the houses, serving to direct the current of wind into the apartments below. A similar plan for the same purpose was adopted by the ancient Egyptians.

In the lateral recesses of this extensive room are different cupboards, or rather cabinets, fancifully inlaid with pearl, and having small panels of delicate and intricate carving; while the flat spaces of the wall above are painted in the grotesque style resembling the devices on old tapestry, with representations of kiosques and other objects, very badly executed.

It is in the Mandárah that the master receives his guests, who, slipping off their outer shoes of red on the floor of the leewan, step up in their yellow slippers without soles which are worn under them to the apartment above, and take their seats on the divan: whereupon pipes and coffee are always brought for their refreshment.

The arrangements of the harem or upper apartments of the family are minutely described in the work of Mr. Lane. In the larger houses it always comprises the luxury of a bath.

Haunted houses are not uncommon in Cairo; the Jinn or Genii, who figure in the Arabian Nights, being the most dreaded visitants. During the month of Ramad'han, these Jinn, Mr. Lane tells us, are supposed to be confined in prison; and hence, on the eve of the festival which follows that month, some of the

women of Egypt, with the view of preventing these objects from entering their houses, sprinkle salt upon the floors of the apartments, saying as they do it, "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful."

A curious relic of ancient Egyptian superstition may here be mentioned. It is believed that each quarter in Cairo has its peculiar guardian genius, or Agathodæmon, which has the form of a serpent. The ancient tombs of Egypt, and the dark recesses of the temples, are commonly believed by the people of this country to be inhabited by Efrits.

The term Efrit is commonly applied rather to an evil Jinneh than any other being; but the ghosts of dead persons are also called by this name; and many absurd stories are related of them; and great are the fears which they inspire.

One of these stories is really so remarkable that we shall venture to quote a short account of it from the excellent work of Mrs. Poole, the sister of Mr. Lane, the well-known Arabic scholar, with whom she was then residing.

"After having searched for a habitation during a month in vain, we were delighted with the offer of an exceedingly good one, which appeared in every respect eligible, and in which we are now residing. But our domestic comfort in this new abode has been disturbed by a singular trouble, which has obliged us to arrange as soon as possible for a removal. The house is an admirable one, being nearly new, though on the old construction.

"We were much surprised, after passing a few days here, to find that our servants were unable to procure any rest during the night; being disturbed by a constant knocking, and by the appearance of what they believe to be an Efrit. The manner of the servants' complaint was very characteristic. Having been much annoyed one morning by a noisy quarrel under our windows, my brother called one of our servants to ascertain how it had arisen, when he replied, 'It is a matter of no importance, O Efendi; but the subject which perplexes us

is, that there is a devil in the bath.' My brother being aware of their superstitious prejudices, replied, 'Well, is there a bath in the world that you do not believe to be a resort of evil spirits, according to the well-known tradition on that subject?' 'True, O my master,' rejoined the man, 'the case is so; this devil has long been the resident of the house, and he will never permit any other tenant to retain its quiet possession for many years; no one has remained more than a month within these walls, excepting the last person who lived here, and he, though he had soldiers and slaves, could not stay more than about nine months; for the devil disturbed his family all night.' I must here tell you that during our short stay in the house, the maids have left us, one after another, without giving us any idea of their intentions, and have never returned; and the cause of their sudden disappearance was now explained by the men, their fellow-servants.

"It appeared, on inquiry, that the man to whom this house formerly belonged, and who is now dead, had, during his residence in it, murdered a poor tradesman who entered the court with his merchandise and two slaves: one of these (a black girl) was destroyed in the bath, and you will easily understand how far such a story as this, and a true one too, sheds its influence on the minds of a people who are superstitious to a proverb.

"Ramad'han arrived, and we were for a time freed from his visitation; but when it ended, the comparative quiet of our nights ended also. To describe all the various noises by which we have been disturbed is impossible. Very frequently the door of the room in which we were sitting late in the evening, within two or three hours of midnight, was violently knocked at many short intervals: at other times it seemed as if something very heavy fell upon the pavement close under one of the windows of the same room, or of one adjoining; and as these rooms were on the top of the house, we imagined at first that some stones or other things had been thrown by a neighbour,

but we could find nothing outside after the noise I have mentioned. The usual sounds continued during the greater part of the night, and were generally like a heavy trampling, like the walking of a person in large clogs, varied by knocking at the doors of many of the apartments, and at the large water jars, which are placed in recesses in the galleries. Our maids have come and gone like shadows ever since our residence here, excepting during Ramad'han; and *sauve qui peut* seems to have been their maxim, for they believe that one touch of an Efrit would render them demoniacs.

* * * * * * * * * *

"A few days since, our door-keeper, a new servant, complained that he not only could not sleep, but that he never had slept since his arrival more than a few minutes at a time, and that he never could sleep consistently with his duty, unless the Efrit could be destroyed. He added, that he came every night into the upper gallery, leading to our sleeping-room, and there he found the figure I have mentioned, walking round and round, and concluded with an anxious request that his master would consent to his firing at the phantom, saying that devils have always been destroyed by the discharge of fire-arms. We consented to the proposal, provided he used neither ball nor small shot. Two days and nights passed, and we found on the third that the door-keeper was waiting to ascertain whether the spectre were a saint or a devil, and had therefore resolved to question him on the ensuing night before he fired.

"The night came, and it was one of unusual darkness. We had really forgotten our recent intentions, although we were talking over the subject of the disturbances until near midnight, and speculating upon the cause in the room where my children were happily sleeping, when we were startled by a tremendous discharge of fire-arms, which was succeeded by the deep hoarse voice of the door-keeper exclaiming, 'There he lies, the accursed!' and a sound as of a creature struggling and gasping for breath. In the next moment the man called loudly to his

fellow-servants, crying, 'Come up, the accursed is struck down before me!' and this was followed by such mysterious sounds, that we believed either a man had been shot, and was in his last agony, or that our man had accidentally shot himself.

"My brother went round the gallery, while I and my sister-in-law stood, like children, trembling hand in hand, and my boys mercifully slept (as young ones do sleep) sweetly and soundly through all the confusion and distress. It appeared that the man used not only ball cartridges, but put two charges of powder, with balls, into his pistol. I will describe the event, however, in his own words:—'The Efrit passed me in the gallery and repassed me, when I thus addressed it, 'Shall we quit this house, or will you do so?' 'You shall quit it,' he answered; and, passing me again, he threw dirt into my right eye. This proved he was a devil,' continued the man, 'and I wrapped my cloak around me and watched the spectre as it receded. It stopped in that corner, and I observed its appearance attentively. It was tall and perfectly white. I stooped, and before I moved again discharged my pistol, which I had before concealed, and the accursed was struck down before me, and here are the remains.' So saying, he picked up a small burnt mass, which my brother showed us afterwards, resembling more the sole of a shoe than anything else, but perforated by fire in several places, and literally burnt to a cinder. This the man asserted was always the relic when a devil was destroyed, and it lay on the ground under a part of the wall where the bullets had entered. The noise which succeeded the report, and which filled me with horror, is and must ever remain a mystery. On the following morning we closely examined the spot, and found nothing that could throw light on the subject. The burnt remains do not help us to a conclusion; one thing, however, I cannot but believe, that some one who had personated the spirit suffered some injury, and that the darkness favoured his escape."

This story so remarkably resembles one told by the different

members of the Wesley family, that it might almost be taken for an oriental version of it, with the sole difference of the catastrophe in the latter. And what is curious in both instances, the cause of the mysterious noises appears to have eluded all research. We should observe, that Mr. Lane was at length compelled to leave the haunted house, and the next comer was even more tormented.

We have had some very lively descriptions of the interior of the harem, and of the habits of its fair inmates, from English ladies who have been admitted, but particularly from Mrs. Poole. But I never met in Cairo with any parallel to the following curious adventure which befell me some years since at Damascus, and which is not without interest here, as it is an infraction of Mahommedan custom in both cities, of which I never remember to have heard another instance.

It should be observed that the inhabitants of Damascus have always enjoyed the distinction, so honourable to the more orthodox Moslem, of being, after those of Mecca, the most special haters of the Giaour; and this pious and proper aversion has been increased and kept alive by the annual passage of the great Mecca caravan. Every body knows the Turkish proverb—"If thy neighbour has been once to Mecca, have a care of him; if twice, deal not with him; but if three times, avoid him as thou wouldest the plague of Allah!" The native Christian inhabitants were always under the harrow, and but one single and obscure European agent had ever been able, hitherto, to naturalize himself. The visits of travellers, although made in the most rigorous oriental garb, were always attended with risk. Frankland, though he travestied himself in robe and turban, could not disguise his dog, a wiry little English terrier, which was assaulted by the Damascene curs, and, but that his master seized and rolled him up in his garments, and rode off with him to the Latin convent, followed by a host of howling enemies, would have led to his detection and insult. Even so late as the time of Lamartine, "the Frank

Emir," with his imposing cortége, the same precautions were needful; and thus it may be supposed that it was not without some twinging apprehensions that I prepared to make my solitary entry in the obnoxious European costume.

My visit however "had fallen" on good and not on "evil times," upon an era of change indeed remarkable and momentous, not only for its immediate but for its far stretching consequences, and distinguished for the first insertion into the old Mussulman fabric of the wedge of European civilization. The Turkish power was broken; the Egyptian flag waved upon the walls of Damascus, planted there, too, far less by the brute valour of the troops of Mehemet Ali, than by the tactics of those French generals (an ominous circumstance, and well deserving the closest attention of our statesmen) who had originally formed and who in reality commanded them.

When the rapid victories of Ibrahim Pasha had made him master of Syria, and given him the sudden possession of Damascus, and when he came to establish there his impartial system of administration, by which the Christians could no more (as by immemorial usage had been their lot) be trampled upon by the haughty Mussulmen, it was deemed a fit season to establish, if possible, an English consulate in so important a station. After much opposition, Mr. Farren at length entered upon this post with every mark of honour from the local authorities, and by his conciliatory manners soon contrived to render himself extremely popular among the higher classes. Still, the state of Syria was uncertain and convulsed; a reverse of the pasha's success would bring back into fierce reaction all the Mussulman intolerance; and sudden reprisals on the Christians were apprehended, in whose fate Europeans would naturally be involved. They were thus in a constant state of jeopardy; and although the consul had a town house, he lived in the suburb of Salaheyih, whence in case of a popular outbreak he might easily make good his escape to the mountains. The day after my arrival we visited the city. As our horses clattered

through the narrow streets, the crowd sullenly made way for us, and curses, not loud, but deep, were no doubt muttered in the choicest Arabic. Many a filthy dervish, pale with suppressed hate, looked daggers as we passed him by. While such was the sullen fanaticism of the populace, only restrained by the arms of Ibrahim, another spirit was gaining ground among certain of the higher classes. The notorious indifference of the pasha himself to the Moslem institutes, and the liberalism of his European officers, which had infected also the native ones, began to influence certain of the Mussulman aristocracy; and, as extremes commonly meet, while the populace were ready to tear to pieces the Giaours who dared to insult their streets in the odious hat and European dress, some of the higher illuminati took a secret pleasure in showing their emancipation from the prejudices of their forefathers. Of this class, principally, were the visitors to the consul's house. I was on one occasion engaged in drawing the costume of a native female servant, when a man of some distinction entered, a Moollah of high descent, claiming as his ancestor no less a personage than the father of Ayesha, the favourite wife of the prophet himself. His demeanour was exceedingly grave and dignified, and, as I afterwards remarked, he was saluted in the streets with singular respect. His amusement was extremely great as he saw the girl's figure rapidly transferred to paper; he smiled from time to time, as if occupied with some pleasant idea, of which at length he delivered himself, expressing his wish, to our infinite surprise, that I should come to his house in company with the consul, and take a drawing of his favourite wife. It may be supposed that so singular an invitation, one so opposed to every Mussulman prejudice, and even established custom, much amused and excited us. At the appointed hour we repaired to the old Moollah's abode. Externally, unlike the houses of Cairo, it presented nothing but a long dark wall upon the side of a narrow dusty lane; within, however, every thing bore testimony to the wealth and luxury

of its owner. The saloon into which we were ushered was spacious and splendid, marble-paved, with a bubbling fountain in the midst, and a roof supported on wooden beams highly enriched and gilt in the arabesque fashion. A large door, across which was slung a heavy leathern curtain which could be unclosed and shut at pleasure, similar to those adopted in Catholic churches in Italy, opened on the court, from which another communicated with the mysterious apartments of the harem. We seated ourselves on the divan,—our host shortly entered, smiling at his own thoughts as before; he doffed his turban and pelisse, retaining only his red cap and silk jacket; he rubbed his hands continually, his eyes twinkled, and he seemed to abandon himself entirely to the merry humour of the moment. A few words had hardly passed before the curtain was gently pushed aside; the lady, like a timid fawn, peeped in, then, closing the curtain, advanced a few steps into the room, watching the eye of her husband; who, without rising, half laughing, yet half commanding, beckoned her to a seat on the divan, while we, our hands on our bosoms in the oriental fashion, bent respectfully as she came forward and placed herself between the old Moollah and Mr. Farren. Speaking Arabic well, the latter was enabled to commence a conversation, in which, after some slight hesitation at this first introduction to mixed society, the lady appeared to bear her part with much ease and vivacity. This delighted her husband, who could hardly help expressing his satisfaction by laughing outright, so proud was he of the talents of his wife, and so tickled with the novelty of the whole affair. While this was going forward, I observed that the curtain of the door was drawn aside by a white hand, but so gently as not at first to attract the attention of the Moollah, (who sat with his back towards it,) and a very lovely face, with all the excitement of trembling curiosity in its laughing black eyes, peered into the apartment, then another, and another, till some half dozen were looking over one another's shoulders, furtively glancing at the Giaours, in the most earnest

silence, and peeping edgeway at the old fellow, to see if they were noticed; but he either was or affected to be unconscious of their presence, while the consul and myself maintained the severest gravity of aspect. Emboldened by this impunity, and provoked by the ludicrous seriousness of our visages, they began to criticise the Giaours freely, tittering, whispering, and comparing notes so loudly that the noise attracted the attention of the old man, who turned round his head, when the curtain instantly popped to, and all again was silent. But ere long, these lively children of a larger growth, impelled by irresistible curiosity, returned again to their station—their remarks were now hardly restrained within a whisper, and they chattered and laughed with a total defiance of decorum. The favourite bit her lips, and looked every inch a Sultana at this intolerable presumption; whereupon the old man gravely arose and drove them back into the harem, as some old pedagogue would a bevy of noisy romps. Delivered from this interruption, the lady, at a sign from her liege lord, proceeded to assume the *pose* required for the drawing. She had assumed for this occasion her richest adornments; her oval head-dress was of mingled flowers and pearls, her long closely fitting robe, open at the sleeves and half way down the figure, was of striped silk, a splendid shawl was wreathed gracefully around the loins, and a rich short jacket was thrown over the rest of her attire; her feet were thrust into embroidered slippers, but the elegance of her gait was impaired by her walking on a sort of large ornamented pattens some inches from the ground. It may be supposed I did not keep the lady standing longer than was absolutely necessary. When I had finished, our host, with a smile of peculiar significance, directed her attention to a small carved cupboard, or cabinet, ornamented with pearl, from which she proceeded to draw forth—*mirabile dictu!*—a glass vessel containing that particular liquor forbidden to the faithful; and pouring it out in glasses, handed it to us all, then, at her husband's suggestion, helped herself, and, as we pledged one

another, the exhilaration of our pious Mussulman entertainer seemed to know no bounds. At the loud clapping of hands, a female slave had entered with a large tray covered with the choicest delicacies of Arab cookery—chopped meat rolled up in the leaves of vegetables, and other and more *recherché* dishes, of exquisite piquancy of flavour; this was placed before us on a small stool, together with spoons for our especial use. To complete our entertainment, we were favoured with a specimen of the talents of an Almeh, or singing woman, confounded by so many travellers with the Ghawazee, or dancing girls. In long low strains she began to chant a lugubrious romance, probably some tale of hapless love and woe; her monotonous cadences would have driven Hotspur mad, worse than

> "To hear a brazen can'stick turn'd,
> Or a dry wheel grate on an axletree;"

but as the story proceeded, the lady appeared rapt, the tears filled her eyes, and she exhibited every sign of the deepest emotion; so different are the modes by which the same universal feelings may be affected.

Shortly after, we took our leave. On my way home, I could not but remark to Mr. Farren, that the favourite wife of our host was by no means equal in point of beauty to some of her less privileged inmates of the harem. He replied that he had also noticed this, and mentioned it to the old Moollah, who had frankly explained the reasons of his preference. She alone, he said, could devise amusements for him, converse with him, and lighten the monotony of his vacant hours. Perhaps too she was no less skilled in those peculiar arts which form the study of oriental women; for, however some may delight to paint the life of the harem 'en beau,' we suspect it is but a sad mixture of mere ennui and sensuality.

There are numerous interesting excursions to be made from Cairo. The pleasantest are to Shoubra, Rhoda, Heliopolis,

and the pyramids, which I shall notice in their turn. In this burning climate, and dusty soil, it is no wonder that the imagination of an Arab paints tranquil repose in a latticed kiosque, by the side of trickling waters, and under the shade of scented gardens, with perhaps the addition of an Houri or two, as the greatest of all earthly delights. It is difficult to form an idea of the absolute craving of a northern traveller for a wholesome bit of green sward, with a bubbling runnel of water, a common field, with hedge-row elm and hillock green, to relieve the eternal drought, and dust, and sultriness. But these things are impossible in Egypt. In the hope of something in the shape of grass, I mounted my donkey and galloped one day to the pasha's kiosque and gardens at Shoubra, beneath a fine avenue of trees completely overshadowing the road which runs pleasantly near the Nile. The gardens are extensive, and well kept, consisting of long green avenues paved with pebbles, and bordered with rows of exotics, which exhale the most delicious odours; here and there are fountains prettily ornamented, and overhung with trees, refreshing enough after coming from Cairo. There is a very extensive bath, and a kiosque overlooking the garden, which is a favourite retreat of the late pasha's. It is pleasant enough to while away an hour or two here, but a far prettier place is Rhoda, an island in the Nile, opposite Old Cairo, where, under the direction of Mr. Trail, an English *master* gardener, who has a pretty bower himself among these shades of his own creation, gardens of great beauty have been realized. The situation is happy, the Nile adding much to the landscape, and one wanders half enchanted among irregular shady bosquets of the most delicious fragrant trees, and shrubs, and brilliant flowers, through which peeps are obtained upon the river, with its flitting white sails, and the distant pyramids. Nor are the decorations of art wanting; for there is also a very pretty building, with a shell-paved grotto, and a small piece of water. I repeatedly visited this place, and took the greatest delight in its verdant alleys; yet

something I thought was deficient, my ideas of a perfect oriental garden were not realized. I wanted to see a wilderness of rustling shades, overarched by the immense green leaves of the banana, and the tall rustling palm, with dense thickets of other trees, intermingled with an infinite variety of those delicious exotics, covered with brilliant flowers, which makes the sense ache with their voluptuous fragrance; a perfect paradisaical bower, such as might be created from the rich elements of eastern vegetation, with kiosques of the *genuine* Arabian architecture, and fountains which might maintain perpetual coolness. Of such I have often dreamed among the alleys of Rhoda. These beautiful gardens were formed at the expense of the late Ibrahim Pasha, whose palace and harem are on the opposite or Cairo bank of the channel, buried in trees and gardens, which extend all the way to Cairo, in place of the old dust heaps which formerly stood near, and which were removed by his orders. These are indeed noble improvements.

Between Rhoda and Cairo is a dreary half-desert region, where however there are various objects of interest which may be glanced at on the way back. There is the mosque of Amr, to which allusion has been made, the oldest in Cairo and its environs, and which displays small round-headed arches, apparently copied from the Byzantine, before the introduction of the pointed arch; the Kasr es Shema, the strong-hold of the Byzantine power, from which the Saracen conqueror wrested Egypt. It presents extremely high and apparently impregnable walls, with gates admitting to the maze of Coptic buildings within, some of which are elevated on the rampart itself. It contains several churches and a convent, in which is a grotto traditionally the retreat of the holy family when in Egypt. It is indeed a curious nest. And besides this the Copts have other convents in the neighbourhood. It is impossible for the most ordinary physiognomist not to be struck with the heavy, sullen, and somewhat sinister look of this singular people, so different from either the Turkish or Arab race. Perhaps some-

thing of this may be derived from their former degraded position, yet not altogether so; and from all that has been said of them, their moral characteristics are answerable to this forbidding exterior; with the worst oriental vices, they are without its redeeming virtues and high qualities, and they may be compared to the Levantine Greeks for subtlety and intrigue, without possessing any of their mercurial liveliness and genius.

In this vicinity was also the Egyptian Babylon, on an eminence, and the site of the Arab cities which were finally supplanted by Cairo. And there is a spot which I also visited once with Mr. Lieder, between this neighbourhood and the sterile crags of Mokattam—the burial-ground of the Jews. This is a dreary place beyond the Arab cemetery to the west of the citadel, quite in the open desert, and from its humble slabs is a wide view over the Nile and the site of Memphis, with the whole range of pyramids from Sakhara to Ghizeh, the quarries of Toura, and the mouth of that wild valley which conducts to the shores of the Red Sea near Suez. Among the many theories respecting the Israelites, is that which supposes that they laboured on the pyramids, and there is an inscription among the quarries at Toura, in the Sinaitic character, which, as it has been averred, records their hard bondage under their Egyptian taskmasters; while some also, supposing that Memphis, and not Zoan, was the seat of the Pharaoh alluded to in Scripture, make the Israelites to have retreated from this vicinity by the valley in question to the shores of the Red Sea. This appears no less probable, than the generally received opinion that their departure took place from the lower Delta; and so deeply interesting is the whole subject, that it casts an influence over the mind when visiting this desolate desert cemetery of this wonderful people. Still nearer to the city are some exquisitely beautiful Saracenic tombs, like slender towers, quite unique in design, which are well worthy of attention. Here too is the tomb of Mehemet Ali and his family, externally among the most humble of these endless and beautiful monu-

ments, but within described as particularly "snug and comfortable lying."

It is a pleasant ride of two hours from Cairo to the site of Heliopolis. Passing through the Bab e Nusr, and a long suburb, the road keeps between avenues of acacias, along near the edge of the cultivated land, which is watered by channels from the Nile, communicating with the canal which traverses the city, and presenting many pretty rural scenes. In the desert on the right are one or two of the ruinous tombs straggling afar from the cemetery of Kaitbay. One of these appertains to the celebrated Melek Adel, the brother of Saladin. Before reaching the mounds of Heliopolis is a well of fine water, on the border of a garden of citrons and palms; in the midst of these is a venerable old sycamore with hollow trunk, under which the holy family reposed, according to tradition, on the flight into Egypt, and drank of the well. It is in truth a very pretty spot; the citron thickets resound with the music of birds, and large vultures rock to and fro on the trembling branches of the palms; the knotted hollow trunk bears, like the old olives in the garden of Gethsemane, marks of the knives of immemorable pilgrims. The balsam tree, according to Pococke, was brought here by Cleopatra from the celebrated gardens of Jericho, but it is no longer met with in either place. A little beyond the village of Mataréeh we enter the area of Heliopolis, between the mounds which indicate the walls of crude brick which surrounded it. The city was small, about half a mile square; it was mérely a collection of colleges and temples, but of the greatest celebrity, as the chief seat of Egyptian learning. Strabo was shown the extensive dwellings of the learned priests, and the houses where Eudoxus and Plato remained thirteen years under their tuition. The traveller who approaches the site along a dead level, is surprised to find that Heliopolis stood formerly on an artificial elevation, overlooking lakes which were fed by canals communicating with the Nile. Nothing whatever remains of the splendid edifices of this

city but one solitary obelisk, about sixty-two feet high, seen from afar rising above a grove of date and acacia trees. It bears the name of Osirtesen I., with whom Joseph is supposed to have been contemporary; and it is thus one of the most ancient monuments in Egypt. The base is buried several feet in the earth that has gradually accumulated after the inundation, which now enters the area, described as formerly overlooking the surrounding level. Osirtesen I. is the first great name in Theban history; he reigned over Upper and Lower Egypt. He was the builder of the older and smaller part of the great temple of Karnak. It was most probably at Heliopolis that Moses acquired the wisdom of the Egyptians, and where he planned the liberation of his countrymen. Here too, or in the vicinity, Jeremiah wrote his Lamentations for their downfal. From the learned priests of Heliopolis Plato, who studied here several years, is believed to have derived the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and of a

future state of rewards and punishments. It has been mentioned in the description of Alexandria, that the seat of learning was transferred hence to that city, and that the obelisks of Cleopatra (so called) once ornamented the fallen city of Heliopolis.

It is singular that this neighbourhood, the probable scene of the Exodus of the Israelites, persecuted by the Egyptian Pharaohs, should, in the reign of the Ptolemies, have afforded a refuge for certain of their descendants from the persecution of Antiochus, king of Syria. Onias, son of the high priest of Jerusalem, took refuge at Alexandria, and besought Ptolemy to grant him permission to build a temple like that of Jerusalem, and to raise up a frontier defence against the aggressions of his Syrian rival. The permission was granted. The temple of Onion was finished, other small cities were grouped around it, and a considerable body of Jews established themselves in the vicinity of their ancient seat of Goshen, where they remained till a late period. The site of Onion is most probably at Tel el Yehóod, or 'the mound of the Jews,' about twelve miles north-east of Heliopolis.

From the height of the citadel and from every open space about Cairo, we had seen the pyramids towering in the distance for several days; we now prepared to visit them. As the distance is not great, some parties go early in the morning and contrive to return by night; others, camping out the first night, proceed the next day to Sakhara, the site of Memphis, but the increasing inundation, by covering the plain, rendered this latter part of the expedition almost useless. We determined, however, to pass a night at Ghizeh, and to see the sun rise from the summit of the great pyramid. But little preparation is needful, some of the excavated tombs serving as a nightly shelter, and the neighbouring Arabs furnishing milk and other necessaries. Some cold provisions and a few candles were all with which we chose to encumber ourselves. We set forth from Cairo in the midst of one those afternoon tempests of hot suffocating dust which are among its most tormenting plagues, penetrating into the inmost recesses of the houses. The air came in hot gusts like blasts from the mouth of a furnace; the impalpable sand whirled and eddied through the narrow crowded streets, filling the mouth, ears, and eyes, and

obscuring all but the nearest objects in a cloud of pale red haze. We kept on our way nevertheless; by the time we reached the open suburbs, the squall gradually passed over; and when we reached the ferry over the Nile at Old Cairo, the sky was perfectly serene.

This ferry is one of the most beautiful, as well as bustling spots in Egypt. The light arabesque houses and swarming cafés of Old Cairo run parallel with the river, and in front is an open space piled up with immense heaps of corn, which, in this dry climate, are left without danger in the open air. There are women selling rich clusters of grapes, melons, figs, and dates. An incessant and most noisy crowd pours down to the ferry upon horses, camels, and donkeys. The river comes down in a broad and glassy current, divided into two channels by the island of Rhoda, the greenest and most beautiful in all Egypt, at the point of which is the building containing the Nilometer, for ascertaining the rise of the river. Its banks are lined by large djerms, or carrying boats, while others sweep down with their blue striped latine sails, swelling to the breeze like the expanded wings of some enormous bird. On the opposite side, above the chocolate-coloured alluvial bank, extends for miles a rich green level, brilliant with luxuriant and variegated crops, dotted with palm groves, and enlivened by Arab villages and minarets. At its extremity, in the strongest contrast, are the yellow sands of the Libyan desert, on the rising edge of which are ranged the eternal pyramids. In the time of the Romans, when Memphis was yet a great city, there was a bridge of boats across the Nile some where near this spot; but now the communication is entirely kept up by means of the ferry. We squeezed down with the rest, and after much contention among the boatmen for the prize of an extra piastre, were huddled, with our donkeys, into one of the smaller barks; and, the huge sail being loosed, in a few moments flew across to the opposite side, and mustered our donkeys upon the raised agger or dyke. Our ride across the plain was somewhat cir-

THE FERRY AT OLD CAIRO

cuitous, on account of the rising inundation, which had not yet, however, entirely cut off the usual communication. We reached the edge of the cultivated land as the sun was setting behind the pyramids in a flush of glory, shooting beams of intensely red light across the irregular sands. Our approach was not unperceived, and a whole posse of Arabs soon rushed forward, not to offer, but to force upon us their importunate, annoying services. It was useless to drive them away; they returned like flies to the attack; fortunately, we had brought with us a well-armed janissary, who knew how to deal with them, and whose baton was pretty freely used upon their heads and shoulders. When we reached our dormitory among the tombs, the Sheik of the village came forward, and we agreed with him for the services of two Arabs to accompany us about the neighbourhood, and help us on the following morning to ascend the great pyramid. This done, we sallied forth by the light of the rising moon, which touched the tops of the billowy waves of sand, while their hollows were in deep shadow. A majestic apparition suddenly burst upon us—an enormous head and shoulders, whitened by the moonlight, towered above the extremity of one of the sand ravines which lay in obscurity below, through which, far beneath the chest of the statue, dimly peeped out the traces of the winged globe upon the tablet formerly buried beneath its paws. The features were much mutilated, yet an expression faintly beamed through them of bland repose and immutable serenity. The pyramids in all their vastness arose behind. No assemblage of objects could be more awful or imposing. The heaving sands which surge up and down, like the petrified waves of a sea, by concealing the base of the Sphynx, and burying the temple and avenue of approach which formerly led up, cause it to resemble some mysterious pre-adamite monarch, or one of those gigantic genii of Arabian fiction, which make their abode in the desolate places of the earth. It is not surprising, therefore, that it should, as Wilkinson informs us, be known to the superstitious Arabs of

the present day by the name of Aboolhôl, or "the father of terror" or immensity.

In its state of pristine perfection, no single statue in Egypt could have vied with it. When by the labours of M. Caviglia, the lower part of the figure, which had been covered up by the sand, was at length uncovered for a while by laborious and Sisyphus-like toil, (the sand slipping down almost as fast as it could be removed,) it presented the appearance of an enormous couchant Sphynx, with gigantic paws, between which crouched, as if for protection, a miniature temple with a platform, and flights of steps for approaching it, with others leading down from the plain above. A crude brick wall protected it from the sand. It is hardly possible to conceive a more strange or imposing spectacle than it must have formerly presented to the worshipper, advancing as he did along this avenue of approach, confined between the sand-walls of the ravine, and looking up over the temple to the colossal head of the tutelary deity, which beamed down upon him from an altitude of sixty feet, with an aspect of godlike benignity. On uncovering the paws, accordingly, many inscriptions were found, records of the admiration of Grecian travellers, and of careful restorations by the Roman emperors. One of the former, as translated by Dr. Young and quoted by Wilkinson, is as follows:

"Thy form stupendous here the gods have placed,
Sparing each spot of harvest-bearing land,
And with this mighty work of art have graced
A rocky isle, encumbered once with sand,
And near the pyramids have bid thee stand:
Not that fierce Sphynx that Thebes erewhile laid waste,
But great Latona's servant mild and bland;
Watching that prince beloved who fills the throne
Of Egypt's plains, and calls the Nile his own.
That heavenly monarch, (who his foe defies,)
Like Vulcan powerful, (and like Pallas wise)."

Arrian.

The whole figure is cut out of the rock, excepting the fore

THE SPHYNX.

legs. The head formerly was adorned with a cap, which has been removed, but portions of the drapery at the side of the face remain. Should any one imagine that the annexed representation exaggerates the size, it may be stated that the circumference of the head around the forehead is given by Pliny as one hundred and two feet. It is supposed to have been originated by Thotmes III., and the names of his son and of later monarchs are inscribed upon it, and they are represented as offering sacrifice to a smaller representation of it.

From contemplating this marvel of the ancient world, we repaired to our nocturnal abode in a tomb scooped out of a ledge of the rock on which the great pyramid is reared. Having arranged with certain Arabs to wake us up in order to ascend it before sun-rise, we lay down, supped, and slept soundly on our carpets.

Beautiful is the dawn in every land; but in Egypt peculiarly grateful, from its refreshing coolness and shadow, too soon exchanged for the glare and heat of the long summer's day. The Arabs awoke us from our slumbers in the tomb, and in a few moments we were at the base of the great pyramid.

As in the case of the Falls of Niagara, so it is with these marvels of human creation, it is not until you stand close beneath them that you realize their stupendous magnitude and almost overwhelming grandeur. In looking up at these countless layers of masonry, each of them more than breast high, which tower upwards to the dizzy apex, imagination readily exaggerates the difficulty of their ascent; but to the Arabs the feat is as familiar as going up-stairs, and their fearlessness and dexterity are sufficient to assure the most timorous. It is at the north-east corner that we began the ascent, where time and accident have somewhat wrought the massive stonework into cracks and fissures; of these the Fellahs know every one, and seizing our hands, they rapidly hauled us upwards, instructing us in every foot-hole; and shouting, laughing, one pulling us

from above, another unceremoniously propelling us in the rear, in a very short time we stood midway up the giant sides of the monument, where we paused a moment, and pressing our backs against the stonework, glanced, half fearfully, down the steep descent of steps upon the ocean of sand at their base, and the boundless horizon expanding in front, at the same time peeping upwards to the sky-piercing summit. Averting our eyes from the dizzy prospect, we then turned round, and more and more excited as we continued the clamber, after a short and desperate scramble, arrived panting and palpitating at the top. Here the fall of a few layers has left a small platform of level stonework, cracked, weather-beaten, and corroded by some thousand years of time and tempests, and inscribed with the names of travellers from every land.

The view from the great pyramid is wonderful as the structure itself. From its skyey crest we look down upon two regions different as life from death. Far as the eye could see stretched away the glorious valley, the eternal fertility of which has outlived the empires founded on, and nourished by, its prolific soil. The same phenomenon to which that fertility was owing was visibly renewed before my eyes: wide portions of the valley were already becoming so many lagoons; the villages and palm groves were isolated; the life-giving waters poured from the brimming river were making their way through various channels, to saturate and enrich the plain. And every where coming up to its green edge, and hemming it in with an impassable barrier, are the yellow sands of that boundless Libyan desert, stretching away to the westward, on the elevated edge of which the pyramids are placed. From the summit of the first of these the second appears in all its grandeur; the tempest has lashed up the sand in great masses against its giant sides; at its foot is a region of the most ancient tombs and pits in the world, the resting-places of priests and nobles clustered round their monarch; their yawning orifices, like the dens of wild animals, honeycomb the broken sand. The Sphynx from

hence appears insignificant; the neighbouring group of palm trees dwindles to a tiny speck.

It was a luxury to look up into the immense arch of the sky, to which we seemed nearer than to the earth, and here of such pure unclouded transparency — we might penetrate into the depths of azure space. Over the eastward mountains, on the other side the Nile, the dawn was shooting upwards its glorious radiance through the vast concave, a few thin bars of lustrous crimson of almost unsufferable brilliancy appeared, and the sun rose like a ball of intense fire. As it clomb the sky the landscape kindled into life; the distant Nile, and the waters of the inundation, flushed with the growing splendour. The smoke curled up from the Arab villages, awaking with all their noises; the barking of dogs, the shrill babble of Fellahs, and the lowing of cattle, faintly ascended to our aery post. But the only sound that arose from the immense expanse of the Libyan desert, was the wailing of the winds, as they contend over its dead surface, and pile it up into shapeless swells and ridges, wakening a wild and mournful music. From the second pyramid and that of Mycerinus were cast, by the rising sun, majestic shadows which seemed to stretch half across the blanched and desolate expanse, a sublime effect which can be but faintly imagined by those who have not witnessed it.

There is an immensity in all the elements of this scene, and in the ideas they excite in the mind. The works of man seem in their magnitude and eternal durability to contend, as it were, with those of nature. Every thing is so strange, so vast, so suggestive of a host of wonderful associations, that there is, perhaps, no other spot on earth where the mind is more exalted and awed. More fortunate than many others, owing to our arrangements, we were quite undisturbed in this contemplation. Our two Fellahs crouched down half asleep on the layers of stone below us; and a young Arab girl, who had climbed after us with a porous water-bottle in the hope of gleaning a few paras, sat immovable as a stone upon the top-

most ledge, cutting the desert horizon with her lithe and graceful form.

How many illustrious travellers in all ages have sat and gazed upon the scene around! and how endless are the speculations in which they have indulged! "The epochs, the builders, and the objects of the pyramids," says Gliddon, "had, for two thousand years, been dreams, fallacies, or mysteries." To begin at the beginning, some have supposed them to be antediluvian; others, that they were built by the children of Noah to escape from a second flood,—by Nimrod, by the Pali of Hindostan, and even the ancient Irish. It was a favourite theory until very lately, that they were the work of the captive Israelites. The Arabians attributed them to the Jins or Genii; others, to a race of Titans. Some have supposed them to have been the granaries built by Joseph; others, intended for his tomb, or those of the Pharaoh drowned in the Red Sea, or of the bull Apis. Yeates thinks they soon followed the Tower of Babel, and both had the same common design; while, according to others, they were built with the spoils of Solomon's temple and the riches of the queen of Sheba. They have been regarded as temples of Venus, as reservoirs for purifying the waters of the Nile, as erected for astronomical or mathematical purposes, or intended to protect the valley of the Nile from the encroachments of the sands of the desert (this notable theory, too, is quite recent); in short, for every conceivable and inconceivable purpose that could be imagined by superstitious awe, by erudition groping without data in the dark, or reasoning upon the scanty and suspicious evidence of Grecian writers. At length, after a silence of thousands of years, the discoveries of Champollion have enabled the monuments to tell their own tale; —their mystery has been, in great measure, unravelled, and the names of their founders ascertained. The explorations of Col. Vyse, Perring, and recently of Lepsius, have brought to light the remains of no less than *sixty-nine* pyramids, extending in a line from Abouroash to Dashoor. These, by the discovery of the

names of their founders, are proved to have been a succession of royal mausolea,—forming the most sublime Necropolis in the world. The size of each different pyramid is supposed to bear relation to the length of the reign of its builder, being commenced with the delving of a tomb in the rock for him at his accession, over which a fresh layer of stones was added every year until his decease, when the monument was finished and closed up. Taking the number of these Memphite sovereigns and the average length of their reigns, the gradual construction of the pyramids would therefore, it is presumed, extend over a period, in round numbers, of some *sixteen hundred years!* Imagination is left to conceive the antecedent period required for the slow formation of the alluvial valley of the Nile until it became fit for human habitation, whether it was first peopled by an indigenous race, or by an Asiatic immigration, already bringing with them from their Asiatic birth-place the elements of civilization, or whether they grew up on the spot, and the long, long ages that might have elapsed, and the progress that must have been made, before monuments so wonderful could have been erected.

Such is the latest theory, we believe, of the construction and import of the pyramids. At the risk, however, of irreverence towards the learned authorities by whom it is propounded, we would remark, that it appears inconsistent with the construction of the great pyramid of Cheops, since the existence of a series of interior passages and chambers, and even of air passages communicating with the exterior, seems to argue a regular design for the construction of the *entire* monument. We are utterly at a loss to conceive how their interior passages and chambers could have been formed *gradually*, as upon this theory they must have been, during the accumulation of a mass of masonry, the ultimate extent of which depended on the contingency of the monarch's life. And if this objection be fatal to the theory, what becomes of the very pretty system of chronology erected upon it? To be sure, the mere existence of

such a number of these monuments, most probably erected successively on a given spot, seems of itself to argue an immense antiquity; but, as Mr. Gliddon well remarks, "the gross amount of cartouches (or names of sovereigns) must be known *before* valid opinions can be expressed as to the era of Menes,"—still oscillating between the 86th and 58th century, B. C.—if Menes indeed can be proved ever to have had any real existence.

As we stand upon this hoary summit, we seem to look back on one hand into the night of immeasurable antiquity, and on the other forward into the written history of the world. On the alluvium below was slowly developed that civilization, that "wisdom of the Egyptians," which descended as a heritage to other nations, and which has influenced our own times. There is no spot on earth so venerable as the plain of Memphis, as there are no monuments like the pyramids. Could we have stood on the same spot three or four thousand years ago, what a scene would have spread out before us! Stretching for miles and miles along the raised edge of the desert, we should have beheld these sixty mausolea of the Memphite sovereigns overlooking their magnificent capital with its gorgeous temples and palaces extending to the Nile; its crowded suburbs, the ferry at Rhoda, distant Heliopolis with its obelisk, glittering in the sun, and in the distance the verdant land of Goshen, extending to the outskirts of the boundless desert of the Exodus.

Over what a large portion of the world's history extend the annals of Memphis! On its pyramids, then fresh in all their original perfection, Abraham may have gazed with wonder upon his migration from the wild pasturages of Canaan. Hither probably was Joseph brought as a slave, and rose to be the minister of Pharaoh; and here may have taken place the scene of his making himself known to his brethren. Here Moses may have been consigned to the Nile in his ark of bulrushes, and hence he may have led the Israelites into the wilderness. Memphis was long the capital of Lower Egypt, till, as Thebes arose to

its utmost height of grandeur under the Ramessean princes, it became secondary to that city. It was taken by the Persian king Cambyses, on his invasion of Egypt. After his return from Thebes, dispirited at the loss of a large portion of his army, he found the people rejoicing at the discovery of a suitable successor to the bull Apis, who had died. He regarded the festival as an insult, and commanding the sacred bull to be brought into his presence, stabbed it with his dagger, and laughingly told the priests that it was made of flesh and blood, and no god. Here he received numerous embassies and magnificent presents from the conquered nations of Asia. Herodotus visited Egypt soon after the overthrow of the Persian dynasty, and at Memphis he made his longest stay. He found the city then at its greatest size, while Thebes again was gradually declining: with its citadel and suburbs it had then a circuit of sixteen miles. It was still a splendid city when Alexander the Great, after his victories over the Persians, advanced to the conquest of Egypt. The Macedonian army crossed the Nile at Heliopolis, and, without opposition, entered Memphis. The wise policy of Alexander was widely different from the insensate fury of Cambyses; he assured the Egyptians that he came to re-establish their ancient monarchy, went in state to the temple, and sacrificed to the sacred bull. From Memphis he floated down the Nile to the Canopic mouth, sailed round the lake Mareotis, and landing at Racotis, laid the foundation of Alexandria. Under the Ptolemies, various Greek and Roman travellers describe Memphis still as being great and flourishing, when Thebes was reduced to ruin in consequence of rebellion against Ptolemy Lathyrus. Under the Romans and the Byzantine emperors, it was still, after Alexandria, the chief city of Egypt; nor did it finally sink, until the invasion of the Arabs under Amrou, who laid siege to its defensive fortress of Babylon on the other side the Nile, already described, and, assisted by treachery, made himself master of it. He next marched to the reduction of Alex-

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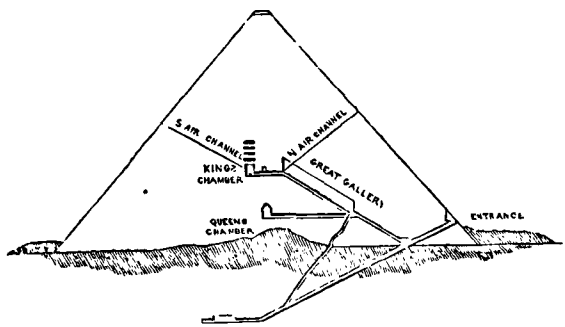
andria. An Arab city was built at Fostat or Old Cairo; others arose in the course of centuries, the materials of Memphis were taken to erect them: and thus, although it subsisted a great and flourishing city long after Thebes had sunk to a cluster of villages, the temples of the latter city still stand to attract the admiration of the world, while of Memphis itself remain but a few insignificant fragments, and the catacombs and pits which contain the mummies of the sacred animals and their worshippers. The alluvial slime of the Nile, to which it owed its origin, has covered it with a beautiful pall of golden harvests and waving palm groves. Well indeed might Napoleon exclaim, when, upon the plain below, over which Rameses, and Cambyses, and Alexander had once marched, he prepared to give battle to the Memlook cavalry—"Soldiers! from the summit of those monuments forty centuries look down upon you."

As the sun rose higher, at length it became necessary to descend. This, to nervous persons, might seem to be worse than to get up, as they have ever the tremendous perspective of the steps before their eyes; yet there is something so inspiring in the whole affair, that their apprehensions are generally forgotten. We began to leap down from step to step, our Arabs preceding us; but we despised their proffered aid, and hurrying down with almost dangerous rapidity, in a few minutes were comfortably extended in a cool niche amongst the billowy sands at the base of the pyramid, where we recruited our fatigues with a repast than which none could ever have been better relished, and indulged in a little repose before penetrating into the interior of the monument.

The entrance to the great pyramid is about forty feet from the ground. Here one is sure to be worried by the persevering annoyance of the Arabs, whose petty, but insatiable demands for beckshish, which leads them to dog your every footstep for a chance of employment on which to found some claim, grievously disturbs you on an occasion when silence no less than

solitude are so desirable. Could we get rid of these provoking trivialities, in standing before the small dark entry to the hidden chambers of this mysterious monument, the vastness of the pile, the enormous massiveness of the layers of stone, and the two huge blocks forming an arch over the passage, the wild heaps of sand driven up by the tempests from the lonely desert around, could rarely fail to produce, hackneyed as is the feat of exploring the pyramids, a sense approaching to awe. At the entrance, the stones follow the inclination of the passage; there are a few foot-holes to aid you in descending the slippery blocks. Stooping down at the entrance of the low passage, four feet high, we began the sloping descent into the interior. This first passage continues on a slope, down to a



subterranean room; but at the distance of 106 feet, a block of granite closes it; and an upper passage ascends from this point at an angle of 27°. Climbing by a few steps into the second passage, you ascend to the entrance of the great gallery. From this point a horizontal passage leads into what is called the Queen's Chamber, which is small and roofed by long blocks, resting against each other and forming an angle: its height to this point is about twenty feet. There is a niche in the east end, where the Arabs have broken the stones in search for treasure; and Sir G. Wilkinson thinks, that "if the pit where

the king's body was deposited does exist in any of these rooms, it should be looked for beneath this niche." He remarks, besides, that this chamber stands under the apex of the pyramid. At the base of the great gallery, to which we now return, is the mouth of what is called the well, a narrow funnel-shaped passage, leading down to the chamber at the base of the edifice, hollowed in the rock, and if the theory of Dr. Lepsius is correct, originally containing the body of the founder. The long ascending slope of the great gallery, six feet wide, is formed by successive courses of masonry overlaying each other, and thus narrowing the passage towards the top.

Advancing 158 feet up this impressive avenue, we come to a horizontal passage, where four granite portcullises, descending through grooves, once opposed additional obstacles to the rash curiosity or avarice which might tempt any to invade the eternal silence of the sepulchral chamber, which they besides concealed; but the cunning of the spoiler has been there of old, the device was vain, and you are now enabled to enter this, the principal apartment in the pyramid, and called the King's Chamber, entirely constructed of red granite, as is also the sarcophagus, the lid and contents of which had been removed. This is entirely plain, and without hieroglyphics,—the more singular, as it seems to be ascertained that they were then in use. The sarcophagus rests upon an enormous granite block, which may, as suggested by Mrs. Poole, in her minute account of the interior, have been placed to mark the entrance to a deep vault or pit beneath. There are some small holes in the walls of the chamber, the purpose of which was for ventilation, as at length discovered by Colonel Howard Vyse.

Above the King's Chamber, and only to be reached by a narrow passage, ascending at the south-east corner of the great gallery, having notches in which pieces of wood were formerly inserted, and from the top of that, along another passage, is the small chamber discovered by Mr. Davison; its height is only three feet six inches; above it are four other similar niches,

discovered by Colonel Howard Vyse, the topmost of which is angular. Wilkinson supposes that the sole purpose of these chambers is to relieve the pressure on the King's Chamber, and here was discovered the cartouche, containing the name of the founder, Suphis, identical with that found upon the tablets in Wady Maghara in the desert of Mount Sinai.

The second pyramid, generally attributed, though without hieroglyphical confirmation, to Cephrenes, is more ancient and ruder in its masonry than that of Cheops. Standing on higher ground, it has from some points an appearance of greater height than that of the great pyramid, and its dimensions are hardly less stupendous. It is distinguished by having a portion of the smooth casing yet remaining, with which all the pyramids were once covered, and it is a great feat to climb up this dangerous slippery surface to the summit. Yet there are plenty of Arabs who for a trifling beckshish will dash "down Cheops and up Cephrenes" with incredible celerity. Its interior arrangements differ from those of the great pyramid, in that in accordance with Lepsius's theory, the sarcophagus of the builder is sunk in the floor, and not placed in the centre of the edifice. The glory of re-opening this pyramid is due to the enterprising Belzoni.

The third pyramid is of much smaller dimensions than the two others, but beautifully constructed. It was the work, as is proved by the discovery of his name, of Mycerinus or Mencheres, whose wooden coffin in the British Museum, very simple and unornamented, as well as the desiccated body supposed to be that of the monarch himself, has probably attracted the notice of our readers. This pyramid is double, i. e. cased over with a distinct covering. Besides these principal ones, there are still standing other and smaller pyramids, more or less entire, grouped about these larger ones, and forming a portion of this stupendous Necropolis of Memphis.

At what period these sepulchral monuments were first violated is uncertain. Some are inclined to attribute their

original desecration to the Hykshos, or Shepherd Kings, and that, owing to this circumstance, the Egyptian monarchs afterwards preferred to hide their sepulchres in the solitary recesses of the Theban hills, though they could hardly have hoped to escape the penetrating scrutiny of a rapacious conqueror. Be this as it may, it is evident from the inscription of their names found on the pyramids, that the Arabian caliphs opened the whole of them in the vain quest of treasure, as Wilkinson supposes, in 820, A. D. They were then found to have been previously rifled, and, singularly enough, to have been closed up again with the greatest care.

That a people who could erect such monuments as the pyramids must have arrived at a high degree of civilization and refinement, is a natural inference, and one fully corroborated by the remarkable discoveries among the numerous surrounding tombs. Wilkinson had already found representations of "the trades, boats, repasts, dancing, agricultural and farming processes, as in the tombs of later date, at Thebes and elsewhere, and with enumerations in *decimals* of the wealth of the owner of the tomb, which, like that of Abraham, consisted principally in flocks and herds. He remarks, that a picture of a butcher sharpening his *red* knife on a *blue* rod, seems to prove the use of steel. Copper, we know from the monumental tablets at those places, was brought by the kings of this dynasty from the neighbouring peninsula of Sinai, where their names are engraved upon the rocks. The researches of Dr. Lepsius have resulted in a vast accession of facts, which he is now engaged in classifying, and the results of which, as regards both the chronology and other matters, are of immense interest and value. These mysterious pyramids, which have excited the conjectures and baffled the scrutiny of ages,—even the empty tombs that were abandoned to the bats and jackals,—seem now, by the Prometheus wand of hieroglyphical discovery, to reveal a world of curious information as to minutest details of a civilization existing some four thousand years ago.

The erection of the pyramids has been generally attributed to the arbitrary tyranny of the dynasty, as some have thought, of foreign origin, who then ruled over Egypt. Herodotus tells us that Cheops was detested by the Egyptians, whose temples he had closed, and that he employed them forcibly in the exhausting labour of building the great pyramid. Great doubts seem to rest over this and other statements of the partially informed Greek historian, and it has latterly been maintained that these stupendous monuments were, on the contrary, erected by gradual and easy degrees, by paid labour, and at government expense; serving, in fact, the most useful and beneficent design of giving employment to the poorer classes of a vast agricultural population, confined by nature on a mere strip of alluvial soil, when thrown idle three months in the year by the inundation of the Nile.*

It is confessedly, however, hardly the moment to enlarge upon the subject of the pyramids, when so much light is about to be thrown upon it by the publication of Dr. Lepsius's researches. We have confined ourselves, therefore, to a description of the more prominent and obvious points, and of the general results of modern investigations. We shall now return to Cairo, and prepare for a continuation of our journey.

* Gliddon.

CHAPTER IV.

DEPARTURE FOR THEBES.—DANCING-GIRLS.—SLAVE-BOAT.—THE RAMADAN.—DENDERAH.—KENEH.

THE winter climate of Egypt is universally declared to be delightful; but it was now the height of summer, and I was, day and night, (to borrow Mrs. Butler's phraseology,) in a state of "absolute meltingness-away;" the closeness of Cairo was almost insupportable; yet now, or never, I was compelled to proceed into Upper Egypt. Every one said, that I should find the heat worse and worse, as was natural, the nearer I advanced towards the tropic. Happily, this proved to be a mistake; but, at the time, it seemed a rash enterprise. However, having no alternative, I hired a servant, and with him went down to Boulak on different occasions to look for a boat. I found much difficulty in suiting myself; most were *too* large and too expensive for a single traveller; in fact, the price of every thing in Egypt seems to have greatly risen of late years, the wages of servants and hire of boats in particular, till it is becoming a serious drawback in the way of travellers with moderate means; —a thing much to be regretted. It is undoubtedly a compensation that more comfort is now obtainable than formerly. I found, at length, a boat of the smaller class, newly painted, and apparently quite clean, which I hired at 900 piastres (£9) per month, inclusive of the wages of the Reis and six boatmen: such provisions as were needful were then laid in, a fresh supply of eggs, bread, meat, and vegetables being generally obtainable at the villages. In order to have a regular supply of milk, which

proved a great luxury, we had a goat on board, and a filtering stone for the water, besides "goollehs," or vases of porous clay to cool the water. I shall not give a list of the various articles we took with us; suffice it to say, that they were pretty numerous, as they must be, if a reasonable measure of comfort is to be attained. The boat, when fitted up, was quite a snug little ark, a world in itself. I went on board, proud of my floating home. I was monarch of all I surveyed, and amused myself with arranging every thing in the nicest order; and what with books, pistols, matting carpets, and green blinds, it looked so pretty and so cheerful, and when I lay down on my bed in the cabin, the breezes were so delightful and refreshing, that I heartily rejoiced I was out of the stifling heat of Cairo and fairly embarked on my cruise.

But, alas for all human anticipations! the morning opened most inauspiciously; the boat proves to be full of bugs, and I passed a restless, a savage night; in addition, Salem has a violent attack of ophthalmia, and has been rolling about the deck in agony: fortunately, we had with us sulphate of zinc and copper, and after obtaining from the city some rosewater, I mixed them, and applied as per prescription in Sir G. Wilkinson's Hand-book, and had the satisfaction of seeing Salem rapidly improve. The extermination of the bugs was matter of more difficulty; the scoundrel of a Reis had neglected to sink the boat as he had promised, and from every chink and crevice in the old planks hundreds came forth, scenting the blood of an Englishman; books, matting, and clothing were all in a swarm with the disgusting vermin, from the swollen old patriarch to the youngest of his descendant fry. We threw the mats overboard to begin with, removed all the furniture, and by dint of sundry pails of water, furious scrubbing, ferreting out the nests with an iron pike, stuffing the chinks with camphor, and then subjecting every separate article to a rigid investigation, we routed the main body the first day, and by a watchful look-out till the second evening, and cutting off stragglers, had fairly gained the

victory; the rest, if there were any, retreating forward to their fitting quarters near the person of the Reis and his men, and coming no more about the quarter-deck. Salem was indignant at the Reis, who turned out a lazy, dirty, worthless rascal, and wanted to beat him; but this discipline of the stick, though very ancient, highly necessary, and perfectly well understood in Egypt, revolts at first one's English prejudices, and I forbade him to resort to it. He shrugged his shoulders, and assured me, that as I should at length be driven to it in spite of myself, it was better to begin at once by producing a wholesome impression, which would be an ultimate saving in the amount required, declaring that, but for my injunction, he would begin by breaking the Reis's head at once. The truth is, that the bastinado was found indispensable by the ancient Egyptians, and that it was administered even to the softer sex, who certainly *do* seem, even in modern Egypt, to require some little correction. The subjects of Rameses the Great took the stick to their refractory wives, and so do the modern Arabs. It is not easy to eradicate the habits of ages, and it is a sad fact that nothing can be done without it. The peasant makes it a point of honour not to pay his rent, though he has it in his pocket, till he has been so beaten that he cannot stand upon his legs. I foolishly demurred, and had afterwards much occasion to regret my ill-timed interference with established usage. Reluctance to harsh measures passed for facility and weakness. I was constantly annoyed, and all but driven to that "ultima ratio" with an Arab boatman, the infliction of the bastinado by an unfeeling petty governor. Much depends however on the character of the captain; mine, to my sorrow, proving a very unfortunate selection. Very amusing are the airs and graces of Salem—my dragoman and factotum, in the exercise of his little brief authority over the Reis and sailors; and truly, for my own sake, I was glad to lend fuel to his conceit, and zeal to his watchful oversight.

With the evening breeze the sails were spread, and we ran

rapidly, to the sound of the darrabuka, along the narrow channel separating the island of Rhoda from Old Cairo. This suburban scenery of the Nile is very charming. The light, gay villas and latticed harems of the wealthy Turks, half buried in rustling date groves and gardens, project over the river, which is animated by the constant passage of boats darting about with their great white sails, like birds, under the lively evening breeze which wafted the odours from the adjacent gardens across the stream. It is a delightful sensation too, when, with stores laid in and preliminary troubles over, one first sees the broad latine sails of the bark expanding to the steady breeze which is to waft it among the wonders of early time, the temples and the tombs of mighty Thebes.

I shall never forget the moment when the boat shot out of the narrow channel of Rhoda, and issued into the magnificent river, rolling in its full breadth between groves of palm. The sun was setting red upon the pyramids, seen afar beyond the level green valley, and burnishing the sands of the Libyan desert; the wind raised vast clouds of dust, tinged with the ruddy beams, and driving across towards the stream, the reddening sails caught the gust, which freshened as the sun set, and as we dashed rapidly through the seething waters, Cairo and its minarets on the eastern banks, the mounds of Babylon and the crags of Mokattam on the west, the long succession of pyramids seen stretching far away to the site of ancient Memphis, all mingled into ruddy haze and twilight obscurity. We made great way, but missing the channel we became involved among a maze of sandy islands, and I had a rough introduction to a common incident in Nile navigation. I had hardly lay down to rest, when I was thrown off my bench upon the floor by a sudden jerk;—we had run upon a shoal: the boatmen, stripping off their scanty attire, leaped into the water, shouting and singing in chorus, and speedily engaged in getting off the vessel, an operation which consumed some time.

At length we got back again into the main stream, and I succeeded in getting a few hours of quiet sleep.

The next day we were becalmed, and the men were compelled to track. As we passed abreast of ancient Memphis, the pyramids of Sakhara and Dashoor, and, later still, the False pyramid, as it is called, successively presented themselves.

About noon the following day, we saw the groves and minarets of Beni-souef, the first town of importance on the western bank of the Nile. A few articles of provision were wanting, and the boat was towed on to the usual landing-place, while I preferred walking along the shore. I found it so excessively hot as to wish myself back again, and was about to hail the vessel, when the sound of music caught my ears, and I perceived an assemblage of people under the shade of a cluster of Sont trees near the river, and rising now and then over their heads, the braceleted arms and castanets of the famous "Ghawazee," or dancing-girls, who, banished from the capital, were forced to carry their voluptuous allurements farther up the river. Having often wished for an opportunity of witnessing their performances, I slipped among the miscellaneous assemblage who clustered around an elevated platform on which the girls were dancing, and, as I flattered myself, unperceived, for on such occasions as these one is not anxious to be conspicuous. But my Frank hat, and the umbrella which I carried on account of the heat, betrayed me, and an officer of the pasha's leaping up from his seat, pushed aside the rabble, and taking me by the hand, hoisted me up on the platform, and made me sit down by his side, a distinction which I was equally unwilling to accept, or without offence unable to decline.

The stage or platform might have been some thirty feet square, partly overshadowed with trees, and partly covered with a rude awning of palm leaves, yet the heat was almost overpowering; the river floated slowly past like boiling oil, and the distance was one undistinguishable blaze of heated mist. Around the platform were grouped a number of the

pasha's officers, civil and military, some on low seats, and others squatted on the ground. The most part seemed men grown grey under a system of cruel oppression, of which they were the agents: their faces were grave to coldness, hard and cruel lines were about their eyes and mouths, and they rarely moved a muscle but when some little by-play of the dancers specially addressed to themselves brought a hideously sensual smile across their pallid faces. These personages occupied the seats of honour, and behind them, as well as below, were crowded together Fellahs and boatmen, women and children of all ages, equally intent upon enjoying what may be considered the national dance.

The two dancing-girls who were ministering to the delight of this respectable audience seemed half overcome with the heat, the excitement, and raki, which an old white-bearded fellow from a neighbouring café administered at the end of

every dance. They had once been handsome, but were now, though young, decidedly usé, worn out with early profligacy, and bedaubed, 'ad nauseam,' with a thick layer of vermilion. Their dress consisted of very large loose trowsers of silk, and a tight-bodied vest open at the bosom, and having long sleeves, with a large shawl wreathed round and supporting their languid figures; they were also profusely decorated with gold coins and bracelets. When I ascended to my post of honour, or rather humiliation, they were merely figuring in lazy and somewhat graceful attitudes around the platform, clicking their castanets, and exchanging speaking glances with the hoary sinners around; but on my seating myself, one of them saluted me with a 'pas' of such an equally original and unequivocal character, as elicited a burst of laughter and applause from old and young, brought the blood into my cheeks, and made me wish myself any where else than where I was. The dance then began; but I am not going, like some travellers, to give, what Byron calls, "a chaste description" of it; suffice it to say, that at first modestly coquettish, it became by degrees the excitement of wanton phrenzy, and at length died away in languor. The points of more salient expression were warmly applauded, both by old and young; none were here ashamed openly to evince, what it is considered more decent to veil, in our own *refined* community, where the accomplished art of the opera figurante is skilled in throwing a still more dangerous charm of mingled grace and piquancy over the same idea, which, in all its *unveiled grossness*, forms the characteristic expression of the Egyptian dance. I was not, of course, at all surprised at this; but I had expected, from the descriptions of former travellers, (which I cannot help suspecting of exaggeration,) far greater elegance in the movements of the dancers; perhaps these might not have been among the most accomplished specimens of the sisterhood. I was glad enough for once to have witnessed the exhibition, but still more content to escape from my post of dishonourable pre-eminence.

St. John correctly says of these dances, "All the nations of the East have, from the remotest ages, delighted in this species of exhibition, which from them passed into Greece and Rome, where it furnished the poets with an agreeable theme for satire. Horace, whose Divus Augustus had doubtless helped to introduce it, laments that the young ladies had acquired a taste for the oriental style of dancing, which was evidently popular at Rome: and Juvenal, who had travelled in Egypt, at a later period, makes mention of the Roman dancing-girls. From paintings preserved in the grottos of Eilithyas and in the tombs of Thebes, we find that the ancient Egyptians had likewise their Ghawazee, who were employed in their domestic entertainments to heighten the effect of the song and the bowl by their voluptuous movements." Up to a recent period, (as late as 1832,) their performances constituted the principal excitement of the Cairenes; but the influence of the Mussulman doctors was opposed to the scandal, and the government was obliged to renounce the tax levied upon their vices, and banish them into the provinces.

Benisouef is a considerable town, the capital of a province, and residence of a bey; and the principal road into the Fyoom and to lake Mœris is from hence. I was prevented by the inundation from visiting this district, which, however, is full of interest. The pyramid of Howara marks the site of the labyrinth, one of the wonders of ancient Egypt; little remains of it above ground, but Dr. Lepsius has recently excavated, and, it is said, traced out the plan. Additional interest has also been given to the Fyoom by the discovery by M. Linant of what are supposed to be the genuine traces of the celebrated artificial reservoir of Mœris, made to retain the water of the Nile after the subsidence of the inundation; and at Biahmoo are some curious ruins, which, if his views are correct, are, probably, those of the two pyramids mentioned by Herodotus as being in the midst of this lake. The Birket el Korn, hitherto regarded as the lake Mœris, is a *natural* lake, thirty-five miles long by

seven broad, its level is lower than that of the Nile. Besides these interesting vestiges there are a few other remains. The Fyoom has always been noted for its fertility, and the variety of its products.* After a brief turn in the wretched bazaar of Benisouef, I rejoined my boat, and with the afternoon breeze made considerable way up the river, the banks of which now begin to assume a more interesting appearance.

When I threw open my window very early next morning, the boat was gliding softly under a light breeze within a few yards of the shore, which was lined with groves of the date palm, reflected by the glassy rippling current of the river. I breakfasted under the awning outside the cabin. There are hours which one can never forget, into which the enjoyment generally spread over large portions of life seems as it were concentrated; among these there are few more happy than those in which we realize another climate, the air, soil, and vegetation being totally different, and all inspiring new and delicious sensations; when a new page of the endless variety of creation lies open before us. Such was this morning upon the Nile. There was such a broad lustrous tranquillity in the cloudless purple heaven, shed upon the noble stream, coming down through its eternal valley in a full, majestic, glassy current; the tall stems of the palms, grouping to the very edge of the river, lifted their burden of gently rustling fans so serenely into the summer air, with their glowing clusters of yellow dates, just ripening and tremulous with their heavy weight, their rich gum catching the morning beams; and the level green valley, variegated with crops, spread away so quietly to its desert boundary, its verdure rendered tenfold more beautiful by contrast with the yellow sands. I leaped ashore, and walked along the raised bank of the river; the palm trees and groves of sont, a species of acacia, were thronged by innumerable birds darting about the surface of the water; and so happy and joy-inspiring is the climate, that the poor enslaved Fellah for a while forgets

* See Wilkinson, vol. ii.

his care, and mingles his songs with theirs, as he leaves his village to repair to the labours of the field. Strolling through the palm groves I reached Bibbé, a considerable village standing on a high bank above the river. The villages in Egypt, very pretty at a distance, are far from answering to the luxuriant appearance of the country, and a brief inspection reveals the degraded and miserable state of the inhabitants. Vast mounds of dust and offal are usually collected at the outskirts, the favourite resort of dogs, flies, and filthy children often quite naked, who assail the traveller, the one with loud barkings, and the other with deafening cries for beckshish. The dwellings are but a collection of mud hovels; but the residence of the "Sheik belled," or head of the village, has usually a little more architectural pretension, though confined to the same material. This functionary is often tolerably well dressed, but the great bulk of the Fellahs have scarcely a rag to cover them, and the women's whole clothing consists of a long blue robe, grievously worn and tattered. Enter one of their wretched dwellings,—there are but a few vessels for food and water, and the ground serves for chair and table; yet, as in such a climate it is certain that the wants of the body are far less sensibly felt, it always seemed to me that our own poor are often greater sufferers, and squalid hovels and naked children are unhappily met with in Ireland as they are here. Besides the dwelling of the Sheik belled, the mosque with its small minaret is the only feature of the village, if we except the singular pigeon-houses, which are built up on the roofs of the cottages in square and pyramidal fashion, consisting of a great number of earthen jars piled one above another and cemented with plaster, each jar serving as a nest: innumerable quantities of these birds are thus lodged, and their flitting about the fields and groves or on the village roofs is a very lively spectacle. I have been amused at the grotesque spectacle presented at one of these villages at high noon, when the whole population, rational and irrational, seems to take to the river 'en masse.' The buffaloes, descend-

ing the shelving bank, get deepest into the water, often showing but the tips of their noses, eyes, and horns, which peer above the stream with a look of intense complacency; camels, asses, and sheep crowd down to the brink; old men are seen sitting apart gravely by the edge, engaged in an elaborate purification of their persons, without a particle of clothing; naked children are dabbling and washing one another, and women swimming about in the stream; while those who have already profited by the cleansing agency of the flood, are sitting apart deeply involved in *depopulating* their ragged garments before venturing again to resume them.

To-day the valley, hitherto quite flat, began to exhibit one of its peculiarities in Upper Egypt, ranges of wild arid cliffs approaching and bordering the river on one side for some miles, while the opposite shore is a rich level. As we advance toward Thebes they become bolder, the Arabian and Libyan chains of mountains alternately advancing and receding, though the former are much higher. We were becalmed to-day, and the men took to towing, as they always do, reluctantly. This brought us up with another and larger boat fastened ashore, which had been hired by a numerous company of Turkish pilgrims from Constantinople and Brousa, who were proceeding, as very many do, by way of Keneh across the desert to Cosseir, and so by sea to Mecca. The major part were men of high respectability, well dressed and well mannered, and though the red cross of England floated from the mast of my little bark, and the crescent from theirs, we soon contrived to get upon a friendly footing, and were always glad, as it usually happened, to find our boats sailing side by side, and moored together for our nightly halt; nor was I long in discovering that there were brighter eyes and whiter skins than those of the dusky Egyptians within the latticed cabins of their kangia; but they came not forth from the confinement of their floating harems. At sun-down the pilgrims formed in a line, and, with their faces towards Mecca, went through the evening prayer in

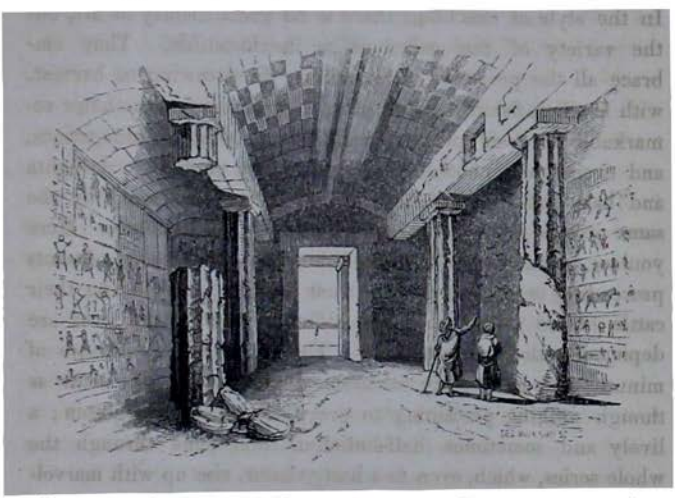
a manner full of impressive solemnity. An old dervish, much honoured, seemed to be the leader of their devotions.

Next day the breeze sprung up and we ran together under Gebel e Tayr, or the "mountain of the birds," a range of precipitous cliffs coming down sheer to the water, broken into ledges which afford shelter to a vast number of water-fowl. On the bleak exposed level above is a Coptic convent, or rather enclosed village, which is famous for a race of aquatic Christian mendicants, who, darting down the steep cliffs from their aerial perch, plunge into the river, and beset the boats of travellers with inportunate clamour. My red cross made me a palpable mark, and accordingly it was not long ere I beheld one of the fraternity rapidly cleaving the waves, shouting "Christiano Howaga," though how he could have descended the perpendicular precipice I sought in vain to discover. Striking out most vigorously, he soon came up with the boat; brandy was his first entreaty, then bread, bottles, and above all, beckshish. He was a stalwart rogue, and as he stood, *in puris naturalibus*, upon the deck, I thought that had there been any on board to whom it would have signified, I would have had him soundly switched with the corbash and kicked into his favourite element, notwithstanding our Christian brotherhood: as it was, the incident was amusing enough, and we gave him a little of all he asked for; the brandy he took internally, the bread he balanced on his head, the piastres he put into his mouth, and holding a bottle in one hand he contrived, though thus encumbered, to steer his course with the other into a cranny of the rocks, and scrambled up, the Lord knows how, to his abode, amid the loud shouts of the admiring boatmen. A recent traveller, Mr. Curzon, has solved the mystery of the ascent, having climbed up to the convent by a very curious natural tunnel which perforates the precipice.

This morning with a light breeze we reached Minyeh, decidedly the prettiest looking town upon the Nile: there is an old white tomb under a sycamore at one end of the place,

and the range of buildings along the water, interspersed with date groves, has a very pleasing effect; many of the edifices are large, respectable, and very clean, and the interior of the town is somewhat better than usual, boasting even of a bath. The view from Minyeh is also very beautiful. Here we laid in as usual some fresh provisions, all exceedingly cheap.

Farther up the river we landed to pay a hasty visit to the celebrated tombs of Beni Hassan, which are situated high up the side of the hills, which I reached after a very toilsome walk. Broad ways lead up to them from the west, and after toiling up the unsheltered slope, you are somewhat indemnified even by the extensive view it commands over the green valley of the river. The tombs are unique in Egypt, not so much for the numerous and highly interesting representations on the walls of Egyptian manners and customs, but from the resemblance of the style of their porticoes to the Grecian Doric, which was, probably enough, derived from it, as will be seen by



reference to the annexed illustration; and what seems to render this yet more singular, is their high antiquity, and the supposi-

tion that the porticoes were imitated from constructive architecture, contemporary or of still earlier date, the reverse of which is however quite as probable. Indeed this tomb opens a very curious subject for speculation. The interior is exceedingly simple and elegant, having a central avenue of the same Doric columns, with a low coved ceiling, which, Wilkinson suggests, may have been copied from a stone arch. On each side is an aisle, and there is a large niche or recess at the end of the central avenue. The walls having been prepared, and divided by lines into different compartments, were covered with an elaborate series of representations, which set before us in a most lively style, and with surprising distinctness, the domestic manners of that remote period—they are indeed a mine to the antiquary. This is the first time that I had seen this interesting peculiarity of Egyptian antiquities, and I was proportionally astonished and delighted. The colours, considering the antiquity of the tomb, are wonderfully preserved. In the style of execution there is no great display of art, but the variety of the paintings is inexhaustible. They embrace all the processes of agriculture from sowing to harvest, with fowling, fishing, and hunting scenes, some of the latter remarkable for their spirit; the different trades and occupations, and even amusements, dancing, wrestling, playing at draughts and ball, and the mode of administering punishment by the same process as at the present day, namely, the bastinado. Here you see, as on the bank of the Nile at the present day, peasants proceeding to market, bearing their burdens, and driving their cattle before them, while the different craft on the river are depicted with equal attention. They have the appearance of minute and laboriously accurate delineations. It seems as though nothing pertaining to every-day life was forgotten; a lively and sometimes half-ludicrous vein runs through the whole series, which, even to a hasty visitor, rise up with marvellous familiarity and distinctness, while the antiquary is enabled by a careful analysis to fill up a very complete picture of the

manners and customs of the ancient Egyptians. In the tomb represented, there is on the top of the left-hand wall a procession of figures which has attracted much attention. The tomb is of the early time of Osirtesen I., with whom Joseph is supposed to have been contemporary, and it has been sometimes imagined that this band of strangers might be the brethren of the patriarch. The group will be gazed on with great interest, though Wilkinson is unable to admit the above supposition, as, though obviously orientals, their number does not agree with that given in the Bible; they are, besides, represented as captives, and the name of the owner of the tomb, who was governor of this part of the country, is also totally different. Besides the tombs which so strongly resemble Doric porticoes, there are others which display the early style of Egyptian architecture, formed upon the imitation of the lotus and papyrus, which is carried out more fully in the temples.

Tracking is toilsome for the men, and small is the progress thus made against the current; a new source of delay also has arisen in the Ramadan, the "month of fasting," whose inauspicious moon succeeded this night. My servant is a rigid and pious Mussulman, and pilgrim to boot; several times a day he prostrates himself upon the deck. Happily his zeal in my service seems to keep pace with his piety, and his fury against the worthless Reis more than equals the fervour of his prayers. I was condoling with him on the hardship of preparing so many good dishes, of which he could not partake on account of his religious principles; when he gravely smiled, and assured me that I was under a mistake, there being a special exemption in behalf of travellers, who, in consideration of their fatigues, were allowed to perform their month's fasting by future instalments, *à discretion*, in the same manner as Sancho liquidated his thousand lashes. I asked if this merciful provision also extended to the Reis and sailors, but this idea he indignantly repudiated; as they were *only* labouring in their ordinary vocation, the exemption did not apply to them; and this curious distinction without

a difference themselves admitted, all but the Reis himself, a man of no religion, a practical infidel, a Kafir, as Salem indignantly told him, who, instead of religiously working and not eating, would only eat and not work, sleeping like a dog during the greater part of the day. The rest, from the old steersman to the last of the crew, never, to my knowledge, infringed in the slightest instance the terrible rigour of this prohibition; the cravings of hunger they indeed contrived, in some measure, to satisfy by taking their meals shortly before sun-rise, but, with their beloved Nile at hand, not a drop of water passed their lips during the burning summer's day; nor were they even free to amuse the vacuum of their stomachs by the fumes of the consoling pipe; listless and languid, they laboured at the toilsome tracking as usual, though with diminished energy, until the hour of sun-set. Then the welcome pipe might safely be taken up, for I remarked they always began with it, and after their temperate meal they were full of merriment, singing often to a late hour in the night. I frequently endeavoured insidiously to undermine the faith of the poor old steersman with arguments of expediency drawn from his weakness and from the compassion of Allah, urging him to take the food which his infirmities really required; but he remained impenetrable to all my infidel solicitations and tempting offers.

The boatmen of the Nile are not less pious in their way than the rest of the Egyptian Arabs, or less accustomed to the use of those religious forms so characteristic of Mahomedan intercourse. Their mutual salutations are all prayers, like those of Boaz and his reapers. "Peace be upon you"—"God be with you"—"May God receive you into Paradise," are common expressions interchanged between passing crews, and they never pass, even at a distance, without saluting one another. The songs with which they encourage one another at the labour of the oar are in a similar strain of invocation, and often have a very beautiful effect. The Reis leads the air, and the boatmen sing in chorus, increasing the fervour of their chant and the vigour of their

labours almost to frenzy, with the difficulty to be surmounted. For all this, they have, like other people, a class morality and feeling, being far more honest and courteous to one another than to the Fellahs on shore, whose property they always steal when they can, without thinking any thing of it; a practice, by the way, religiously reciprocated by the landsmen.

Nothing can be done with them without frequent presents of meat or money. Dr. Olin amusingly says, "Gratuities of all sorts, in food, money, or any other form, are denominated 'bucksheesh.' This is the first word in the language which a traveller is likely to learn, and the least tenacious memory is in no danger of forgetting it. It is repeated by every body and on all occasions. If the traveller turns his eye ever so carelessly towards a boat or a buffalo, a pile of wheat or a sack of dates, he is asked for bucksheesh by the persons who have the charge of these objects. If you look into a cabin or the gate of a village, you are expected to pay 'bucksheesh.' Every person who does you any service, in addition to the stipulated or usual pay, expects 'bucksheesh.' If we speak kindly to the Reis or sailors, or even look upon them with an unclouded brow, they demand this species of tribute. If the wind proves favourable, or we have succeeded in driving them to their work a little earlier than usual, or in keeping under sail till the sun is fairly out of sight, it is sure to be hailed as an auspicious occasion when we may testify our approbation by a gratuity. Our sailors, as often as we will listen to them, amuse us with stories about the Howagas, or Frank gentlemen, whom they have formerly carried upon the Nile. In all of their narratives they have no other standard of excellence than the amount of bucksheesh bestowed upon them. The man who has given bucksheesh liberally, no matter if he has flogged them every day, is always *taib*.* All others are evil in their sight."

I have now become quite accustomed to this boating, and in many respects it is unequalled travelling. I have not yet de-

* Good—excellent.

scribed my little vessel, or my mode of life. The kangia is about thirty feet long, with two masts and large latine sails, very picturesque in appearance, and admirably well adapted to make the most of the wind; there is but one objection to them, they require constant attention and nice management, without which one runs the greatest risk of capsizing by the sudden squalls which come down from the mountains. The after-part of the vessel is occupied by a double cabin with a narrow space between, the principal one opening on the deck, and prolonged as it were by means of an open verandah, under which it was pleasant to sit during the great heat of the day. There is a bench on each side the main cabin, which has also windows with green blinds which can be opened and shut at pleasure. One of these benches was furnished with a mattress, which served by day for a sofa, and by night, with a little addition, as a bed; the other was partly occupied by books, &c., and served also as a table. Now that the bugs were routed, all was perfectly clean; every morning, both deck and cabin were thoroughly washed, an operation absolutely essential to comfort. The after-cabin and passage served as a deposit for stores and a washing-room.* The breezes on the river are so refreshing, that I slept far better in my little cabin than at Cairo. I was always up and dressed at a very early hour, often before sunrise; and nothing can be more delicious than these morning experiences on the broad bosom of the river, gliding alongside the shore in the freshness and serenity of dawn. One delight of this mode of travel is, that you are always at home with nature;—for weeks one never misses seeing the sun rise and set in the same unrivalled splendour. I was familiar with moonlight and starlight on the broad and glassy stream, and though, travelling alone, the hours often hung heavy on my hands, I had others beyond all price. As the wind was often light in the forenoon, it afforded an opportunity for taking a walk,

* It was much infested with rats; the best prevention is to hang a light up in the cabin, which generally frightens them away.

sometimes of some miles, along the raised bank, before the heat grew intense; and this habit was at once healthy, and affords every opportunity of enjoying the rich variety of cultivation which adorns the valley, as well as of gaining an insight into the habits of the population.

The hours of noon are those alone in which, even in summer, there is any sense of oppressive heat; the roof of the cabin is then scorched, the atmosphere within is close and sultry, and you long for the shadow of a tree on shore. As the evening advanced and the heat declined, I generally mounted upon the roof of the cabin, and took my post by the old Nubian steersman. The setting of the sun was looked for with anxious interest by the fasting sailors, and as he sank in glory behind the Libyan mountains, they revived from their languor, and began to chat and sing, and exchange lively sallies of merriment. The grateful smoke of their evening meal curled up among the cordage, and it was pleasant to see them assembled around it, and grow more and more animated as the evening advanced. The swelling sails are reddened by the evening glow, and the little kangia glides almost dreamily along the enchanted river, old Nilus with his full and solemn flow. There is no describing the beauty of the scene and hour, such as I felt it this evening on the approach to the village of Sheik Abade, the ancient Antinoopolis—no telling how gloriously the setting sun burnished the palm groves which line the river's brink, and the Sheik's house and sycamore tree, the bright sails, and the young camels browsing among the verdure; nor the vividness with which all the objects were reflected into the glassy current, how gorgeous were the hues of sun-set upon the river and the rocky hills, how sacred the stillness of the hour, and the intense tranquillity of that broad Egyptian sky. A musky fragrance coming off deliciously from the shores, the monotonous creak of the water-wheel, the distant and fitful cries from the villages, or the shrill note of some solitary bird flitting across the stilly expanse of the river, all add to the luxurious melan-

choly of the scene and hour. As the sun sank, in the midst of the rosy light with which all nature yet glowed and trembled, ('the after-glow,' as some have well called it,) the yellow orb of the moon uprose from behind the eastern hills, and the mingled light of the two luminaries long blended in beauty indescribable, till the red light paling more and more, gave place to night, scarcely less bright, but softer and more spiritual than day, and yet indescribably intoxicating. The stars came out, not dimly, as in northern climates, but starting up at once resplendently from behind the hills with almost supernatural brilliancy, casting far down into the depths of the still river reflections so wonderfully vivid, that the boat, as it noiselessly cleft the waters, seemed to float through liquid space studded with all its orbs. At such times, the simple beauty of such scenes alone would be sufficient enjoyment, but you are never here without in addition a haunting sense of the wonders that line the banks of the river, remains of the past empire of that great people to whom its waters were sacred.

We reached Beyadieh about eight, the wind then sunk, and we moored the boat a little in advance of the village. I went on shore to enjoy the beauty of the night, and was walking up and down, when a few Copts, returning from a neighbouring convent, attracted by my Frank costume, came up and claimed Christian brotherhood, with many sincere demonstrations of good-will. We sat down on the bank of the river and conversed. They were fine-looking men, the chief of the adjoining village, which was entirely held by Copts. From all that I could gather, they complained less of the exactions of the pasha, and seemed in more comfortable condition, than the peasants elsewhere; their lands are also better and more skilfully cultivated, and thus the burden of oppression falls more lightly on them. There is a considerable number of them in this neighbourhood, and they possess several convents.

The following account is given of the foundation of Antinoopolis. Upon his visit to Egypt, the emperor Hadrian was

accompanied by his favourite, the beautiful Antinous, of whom so many busts and statues are to be seen in different museums. The emperor had consulted the Egyptian astrologers as to his future fate and the welfare of the empire, and the oracle had declared that his prosperity must be purchased by the sacrifice of whatever was most dear to him. Upon this the grateful Antinous, to secure the welfare of his master, threw himself into the Nile, near the village of Besa. Well may it be said that

> "Nothing in his life
> Became him like the leaving it."

Hadrian built a city by which to commemorate his favourite named Antinoopolis, and the country round the new city was formed into the "Antinoite nome." It was, of course, rather a Roman than an Egyptian city. There are very extensive traces of its ancient magnificence, but none of its monuments are now standing.

The wind freshened towards morning, and we pursued our way, in the evening reaching the tremendous precipices of Djebel Aboufodde, on the Arabian side, which hang fearfully above the rapid current, and assume, as the boat passes close under them, an aspect of terrific grandeur; far up among their clefts are seen the caverns formerly tenanted by the ascetics of Upper Egypt, where Athanasius sought, it is said, shelter during the course of his eventful career. Here the gusts of wind, coming suddenly down from the high eastern desert through the ravines of the mountain, required the utmost attention; we had several narrow escapes, our main-sail was taken in, and still, impelled forward by a strong wind, we swiftly advanced, in spite of the current, towards the town of Manfaloot. This town, rapidly declining in consideration, stands on a high bank of earth above the river, which sweeps round it with such fury that it has carried away large portions, and threatens to ruin the entire place. The wind increasing to

a gale, soon brought us alongside our friends the Mahommedan pilgrims, whose superior sailing qualities had enabled them to get there before us.

The night was wild and stormy, and the boat rocked about so unpleasantly, that I was glad to exchange the scene and go ashore into the town. A lamp twinkling in the small minaret guided us on our way, and a stranger scene I have rarely beheld than that presented by the streets of Manfaloot by night. They were so obstructed by sleepers in the dust and sand, that it was difficult to avoid tumbling over some of them. The sides of the street were occupied by the rational creation—dogs, camels, and asses irregularly filling up the centre. Few of the wretched inhabitants seemed to have any covering but the scanty rags which formed their unique apparel; but in some cases, the father of a family had literally "spread his skirt" over the whole brood as they lay nestled up together in a heap. Numerous blind men were groping about in a cloud of dust with long sticks to find a suitable corner out of the main thoroughfare, and out of reach of the hoofs of camels and asses. Whether this sleeping 'sub dio' was a matter of preference, or rendered necessary by the houseless condition of these poor people, I cannot say, but few things, even in this land of misery, struck me with a more painful impression. Blind beggars abounded in the morning; one, having found out there was a Frank boat, got a boy to guide him to its side, and, in piteous terms, entreated for a garment: all he had on scarce served the purposes of decency, and had been so patched and darned, that there was no longer any place for needle to hold; no skill could hold its tatters together much longer, and I expected with every gust to see them decompose, and leave him without a rag: poor fellow, his need was certainly desperate as his entreaties were urgent. It so happened, that I had on board an old pair of Turkish cotton drawers, which I had taken to go into the water, and I tossed them to him; he passed his fingers carefully over them, and when he found they

were actually whole and sound, and had not even once been mended, his joy threatened to overset his reason, and somewhat peril his neck; for with an outpouring of thanks and blessings, he stumbled back to the town over the broken ground, with a dangerous rapidity I should not have supposed him to be capable of.

In the mountain range opposite Manfaloot are the celebrated crocodile mummy cases, which have been explored with so much difficulty and danger. I had no desire to be half suffocated in quest of the sacred animals, and sailed away with a fair wind, on my upward course to Thebes. In the course of this evening we brought to, and 'took tea' quietly in a secluded grove of palms in sight of Siout, the capital of Upper Egypt, and residence of the governor. This is a considerable town, with handsome mosques; and the environs are very rich and pleasing. Behind it and overlooking the valley of the Nile rises a mountain range, perforated with numerous sepulchres, an excursion to which is gratifying, for the sake of the extensive view. Siout is the resort of the caravans of slaves from Darfur, who, after being hunted down in their native country, are brought here across the desert from the great oasis, at a considerable loss of life. It has, moreover, a still more infamous distinction, as being the chief place where the black guardians of the harem are fitted by a torturing process, and by the loss of manhood, for their degrading functions. One shudders with horror at such a concatenation of atrocities, and at the state of society which demands so many unhappy victims. It would scarcely be believed, if the degraded state of Christianity in the East were not so well known, that its Coptic professors were the agents in this most horrible violation of humanity.

After a short stay at this place I resumed my course up the river, the scenery very striking, and the wind unusually favourable and strong; so that the whole way to Girgeh we had a sailing match with the pilgrim boat, which took but very little

the lead of us; sometimes, indeed, we ran alongside her, and I got a peep into the cabins where these pious gentlemen had hidden away their Turkish beauties—for one at least was lovely. The finest sailing was under the noble crags of Gebel Sheik Heredee; it became necessary to take in the main-sail, and yet we tore through the water at a delightful rate. In the afternoon, we ran along a flat shore, and were assailed by loud cries for bread from the naked and half-naked children, (a scene painfully reminding me of Ireland,) who ran alongside our boat leaping gullies and wading canals, with all the eagerness of famine: one fine young girl threw herself naked into the river, and gaining the boat, held on as we sailed, (for she would not come on deck,) a feat that obtained an unusual beckshish. Salem got on the top of the cabin, and we threw away among them, in the wildness of the scramble, every loaf we had on board, and I was fain to put up with a stale fragment till we reached Girgeh late in the evening, after the finest day's sailing we had during our entire cruise.

We found several boats moored at the landing-place without the town; from the next to our own proceeded loud chattering, and the light caught upon the naked dusky skins and woolly heads of a number of negroes. I went ashore and found this to be a Djerm descending the river laden with female slaves for the Cairo market, the major part negro girls of little value, with some few more delicate specimens, however, of Abyssinian beauty, much esteemed, as Mr. Lane informs us, by the voluptuaries of the capital.

I went on shore very early the next morning; it was a dead calm on the river. The principal Jellab, or slave-dealer, was seated on the shore, apparently waiting the chance of a purchaser. A number of the negro girls were lounging about upon the sunny shore, revelling in the grateful heat; while others sat upon the boat. They were fine, well-made creatures, glossy as satin, and in excellent condition; for the most part lively, careless chatterers, and rather bearing out the accounts

of some travellers of warm imaginations, who represent them as purely sensual, and always anxious to attract a purchaser as soon as possible. Whatever suffering they might have endured in the circumstances of their original capture, they were to all appearance taken very great care of. A fat, flabby old Turk now came waddling down from Girgeh, and the Abyssinians were produced and shown. They did not, however, answer his expectations, in fact, I had myself seen far handsomer in the slave bazaar at Cairo, and he fell back upon the negro girls. A group was now formed round one whom I had not noticed before, and who presented in her reluctant, downcast manner, a singular contrast to the rest. Her dress consisted merely of a string of leathern thongs around the loins, but a large wrapper was thrown loosely over her. The Jellab placed her, like a connoisseur, and proceeded to dwell upon her 'points,' but she did not somehow tell upon the sensual fantasy of the old Turk, he was provoked by her air of dejection, and rudely thrust up her declining head; next, with a cautious manipulation from head to foot, proceeded, in jockey phrase, to ascertain her soundness; and, finally, hastily whipping off the scanty covering from the poor shrinking creature, he proceeded to satisfy, with a hasty glance, the last and most important particulars of his curiosity. The Jellab looked up and smiled with an unanswerable air, but the old Turk looked dubious and unsatisfied, the crowd of callous and laughing spectators were, as usual, divided in opinion, while the defenceless subject of their gaze and controversy stood cowering before them with an air of abject, hopeless despondency. One might see that, although of a race supposed to be comparatively destitute of feeling, nature had made her of a mould too fine for such rude handling; perhaps some home remembrance came across her mind, for a more melancholy expression I never witnessed in a human creature. Finally, the old Turk declined to purchase her, and she walked listlessly back again to her corner in the hold of the Djerm.

A SLAVE BOAT AT GIRGEH.

Sitting somewhat apart was a very interesting little boy, whose appearance struck me, which, when the Jellab observed, he urged him forward to solicit a beckshish. I inquired, through Salem, if he also was for sale; the Jellab, with a smile, replied that he was, and that he could recommend him too, for he was his own son, his mother being a handsome Abyssinian slave, by the sale of whose offspring he thus expected to reconcile profit with pleasure. It was some consolation to hope that this poor child might find in the humanity of a Turkish or Arab master the protection which his own father denied; that if gifted by nature he might perchance rise to a high station in society, and become the counsellor of princes,—a redeeming feature in the system of oriental slavery, which is wanting in the far more cruel and hopeless despotism of the great western republic.

Scenes like these are painful to witness even in Egypt, but what are they compared with such as follow? "The next case," says a correspondent of the *Cincinnati Herald*, "was that of a young white woman, sixteen years old, with a young child. I say *white* woman, because the auctioneer said she was only one-eighth black, and I have seen many of the fair girls of Ohio who could not boast of as fair complexion, or as good figure or features. She came upon the stand with her infant in her arms, in the deepest misery. A gentleman, who had taken his seat beside me, observing that I was very interested, remarked he thought I was a stranger in that country. I answered that I was. 'These things look odd to you?' 'They do.' Said he, 'You see that man in the crowd,' pointing to one within a few paces of the stand, 'that is Dr. C. He hired that girl last year, and that child is his!' The Georgian bid three hundred dollars; some one bid four; the Georgian bid four fifty; the girl cast a piercing glance at the crowd,—her eyes rested on Dr. C., who instantly averted his face. She gazed one moment, then burst into a torrent of tears. She was knocked off to the Georgian. Thus the fiend saw his child and its mother sold

into southern bondage. My God! thought I, is it possible? *I was cured of my pro-slavery principles.*"

While stealing in my kangia along the solitary patriarch of rivers, I had often called to mind the huge booming steamboat of the American waters with its hundreds of passengers, and fallen into a train of thought arising out of the contrast. There was no doubt a time when the banks of the Nile and the Mississippi were the haunts of the wandering savage, and the first civilization that arose on their banks is alike unrecorded and mysterious. But in the course of ages grew up that great Egyptian monarchy, which long subsisted, powerful and prosperous, whose civilization has influenced even our own times; while still the king of western floods continued to roll through savannahs peopled only by the wandering hunter. Of that empire despotism, caste, and slavery were, however, constituent elements, and the admiration with which we regard the monuments of its grandeur is dashed by the reflection that we are looking on the labours of human victims.

In a later age, when Christianity had induced a more humane civilization, America commenced among the vast primeval forests her noble and boundless career. Free from the chains of the old world, but with the advantage of all their arts and sciences, a century or two suffice to bring about results which, under less favourable circumstances, ages might not have effected. With wonderful energy the forests are felled, cities arise, emigration pours hosts into the waste, steam joins together the remotest corners of the immense territory, which is rapidly filling up with its millions of inhabitants; while the population of Egypt, under an exterminating policy, is as rapidly lessening. What contrast was ever more striking than the relative condition of the two countries at the present day? Egypt, fallen and decrepit, bowed under oppression and the paralysing influence of a false religion. America, daily rising in power, a land of light, freedom, enterprise, and Christianity! By what extraordinary chance is it then, that, unlike in every thing else, they

should resemble each other only in one damning particular—how unaccountable the infatuation, that, under circumstances so opposite, the citizens of a free republic can tolerate the worst institutions of the old world; that patriots and Christians, ay, even ministers of that religion of mercy, should be so blind to the guilt and cruelty of this system, as even to plead for it the sanction of Divine prescription!

A few miles back from Girgeh are the ruins of Abydos, or This, already alluded to in the historical introduction. There are the remains of two temples, partly buried in sand and rubbish. They were built by Osirei and his son Rameses the Great. In one of these, sacred to Osiris, was found the famous tablet of Abydos, containing a series of the names of the royal predecessors of Rameses, agreeing perfectly with a similar one at Thebes. Unfortunately the portion containing the earlier kings was broken off. This important fragment is now in the British Museum.

Between Girgeh and Keneh the scenery is in many places exceedingly fine, especially in the neighbourhood of Kasr e Sayd, where the Dom or Theban palm begins to blend its peculiar fan-like foliage with that bearing the date, and to add to the enchanting richness of the vegetation. The fertile level plain, covered with luxuriant crops of Indian corn, the finest imaginable, with sugar cane, and a variety of leguminous herbs, among which the nutritious and palatable bamyeh is conspicuous at this season, delights the eye with its perpetual greenness, as the boat glides past the luxuriant and scented banks at even-tide. How many beautiful scenes of this kind recur as we advance! and how blessed indeed would be this land, if the race who cultivate it enjoyed the advantages of civilization; if the comfortable homes of freemen replaced the mud hovels and squalid misery of the poor Fellahs! The mode of irrigation adopted in Upper Egypt differs from that seen below Cairo, the water-wheels being replaced by the Shadoof. In general there is but one man with a lever, but in this instance the power

is doubled. It will be seen that the machine consists of two pillars of wood with a horizontal bar across, and levers formed by a branch of a tree, having at one end a heavy weight composed of mud, and at the other a vessel of leather or basket-work, which is made to descend into the river, and hoisted by the assistance of the weight to the level of the land above, then poured into a trough hollowed out, from which it is distributed in channels about the surface of the land. When the water of the river is low, four or five of these machines are required to raise the water to the necessary level. Few occupations can be more laborious than working the Shadoof, it is, in fact, the heaviest duty of the Egyptian peasant. Its use, according to Wilkinson, is as ancient as the time of Osirtesen I., the supposed contemporary of Moses.

The engraving also displays the predominant foliage on the banks of the Nile. The date palm is the great ornament and blessing of Egypt; not only is its fruit a delicious article of food and the principal sustenance of the lower classes, but its trunk is used for building purposes, and the branches serve for the manufacture of a variety of light articles, which are both cheap and serviceable; its long leaves are made into mats, baskets, sacks, &c.; and its fibres supply material for the ropes used in rigging and other purposes. Almost every thing for *ordinary* use in Egypt is made of the clay of the Nile, or the palm tree. The Dom or Thebaid palm is also very picturesque, with its singular radiating groups of fan-like branches, and its thick clusters of dark, fig-like fruit. It is peculiar to Upper Egypt, and I have seen one or two near the site of Ezion Geber, at the head of the Œlanitic branch of the Red Sea. The density of the palm groves varies with the richness of the soil, and some places are noted for the peculiar excellence of the fruit. At one of these, while descending the river, my servant requested permission to go on shore and purchase a quantity to take to Cairo. On returning to the boat, he hung up in my cabin one of the most magnificent clusters ever seen, the flavour

THE SHADOOF

with the Doum and Date palms

of which was very far superior to that of any other I had ever tasted.

We drew up to the bank this evening, in a wild spot on the western side, where we found another boat moored, and a number of men on shore by a large fire: they had been quarrying among the mountains on the opposite side, but considered it unsafe to remain there at night, owing to a band of robbers who were said to occupy the country thence to Keneh, and after committing depredations both by land and water, retreat among the fastnesses of the Arabian chain. I had heard so many reports from the boatmen of the insecurity of particular places, hitherto without any confirmation, that I was disposed to treat this also as a fiction, but subsequent information at Keneh attested the truth of these reports. It was currently believed that the governor of the place was in league with the brigands, and shared the plunder. We fired two or three rounds to assure any who might cross the river of a warm reception, and for the first time on the river felt some slight apprehension of an attack. The men were all armed with formidable sticks about six feet long, and a good watch was kept, but our rest was undisturbed. Subsequently I was told at Keneh that they never attacked a boat with the Frank flag, so that by day there was no danger to be apprehended. This incident, occurring in a country so safe as Egypt, rather surprised us, but it was regarded as an exception, and the governor, who was suspected of connivance, has since been removed from his post.

Advancing to the southward, there is a very perceptible difference in the appearance of the people, they grow darker and heavier in look, have less of the genuine Arab, and appear to be a mixed race, though perhaps the increasing heat of the climate alone may account for this peculiarity.

A voyage up the Nile without the sight of a crocodile must appear strangely incomplete, since there is hardly a book of travel that does not abound in feats of marksmanship at the

expense of the sacred animal. This is owing to the circumstance, that most travellers ascend the Nile in winter, when the river is low, whereas, it being with me the season of the inundation, the sand-banks upon which the monster is wont to disport himself were of course submerged. The following particulars

are derived from Messrs. Bonomi and Sharpe. "Crocodiles were formerly found much farther down the river than at present, as the hunting them is represented on the tombs of Memphis; at the present day they are not met with lower than about Siout. They are seen in groups of three or four, basking upon the sunny shoals, and take to the river when startled at the approach of a boat. There is an old story connected with them so curious, that we might well have been justified in doubting its truth, but for the attestations of numerous travellers. It is, that a small bird, called from its cry the 'Sic-sac,' hovers about this ungainly monster, and warns him of the approach of danger by dashing to and fro against his head, and uttering its shrill peculiar note, upon which the crocodile seeks safety under water. This was lately described by the Hon. Mr. Curzon, who

himself witnessed it. It is very rarely that they are known to attack any one. In some parts of Egypt the crocodile was worshipped as a god; in others, killed and eaten as a public enemy. Juvenal, who held some military post in the province, found much amusement in satirizing the superstitions of Egypt. But, adds Mr. Sharpe, he sometimes takes a poet's liberty, and when he tells us that man's was the only flesh that they ate without sinning, we are not to believe him to the letter. He gives a lively picture of a fight which he saw between the citizens of the two towns of Ombos and Tentyra, who had a long standing quarrel about their gods. At Ombos they worshipped the crocodile and the crocodile-headed god Savak, while at Tentyra they worshipped the goddess Athor, and were celebrated for their skill in catching and killing crocodiles. So, taking an advantage of a feast or holiday, as the people of Modena and Bologna did in the days of Tassoni, they marched out for a fight. The men of Ombos were beaten and put to flight, but one of them stumbling as he ran away, was caught and torn to pieces, and, as Juvenal adds, *eaten* by the men of Tentyra."

Crocodiles were also taken and tamed by the ancient Egyptians, who made pets of them, decorating them with ear-rings and bracelets, and pampering them with roast meat and wine. Amid the variety of animals brought from the subjugated provinces to Rome, to be exhibited and destroyed in the amphitheatre, was also, as Strabo informs us, the crocodile, thirty-six being introduced at once for that purpose by Augustus, who were killed by the gladiators, and there is mention also of an artificial lake at Rome in which tame ones were exhibited. In the British Museum is a statue of a man of Dendera performing feats of agility on a crocodile's back. The aperture or pupil of the eye contracts into a narrow perpendicular line, and the Arabs relate that during the season of the inundation, when the water of the Nile is considerably darkened by the quantity of clay held in solution, it is totally blind, confirming in some measure the statement of Herodotus.

I had expected that we should have reached Keneh in the morning, but on awaking found the boat moored at the nearest point to Dendera, while Salem had been on shore to procure donkeys, so that after breakfast I had nothing to do but land and proceed to the temple, with feelings of high expectation and curiosity, this being the first, as well as, by common report, the most beautiful in Egypt. The first opening view entirely disappointed me, nor could I help contrasting the effect of Greek and Roman ruins—of the temples of Athens, and Girgenti, and Baalbec, their ranges of columns and half-ruined porticoes, rising in picturesque disorder against the sky, with the heavy square walls and flat roof of the Egyptian temple, cutting into a back-ground of yellow sand. Nor did a nearer approach altogether remove this unfavourable impression; the façade, though vast, seemed heavy and half barbarous, and inspired none of that mingled awe and delight which I had anticipated. On entering, however, one cannot

fail to experience the peculiar emotions produced by Egyptian architecture, a feeling of gloomy sublimity which awes rather

than elevates, and which to the ordinary spectator is greatly heightened by the sculptures and hieroglyphics which every where cover the walls, in mute mysterious meaning, leading back our ideas to the recondite religious ideas which they symbolize, and inspiring a deep and almost trembling curiosity as to the rites which were celebrated in the recesses of these soul-subduing temples. The flat roof in its dusky obscurity, and the grand portal of simple and heavy proportion, with the inner chambers receding into utter darkness, add to the effect of this first impression.

The columns of the portico, of which there are twenty-four, are peculiar; at least there is no other instance of them on this scale. Capitals, whose forms and details are generally borrowed from the lotus and palm, and other plants and flowers, consist here of the head of the goddess Athor, the Venus of the Egyptians, repeated fourfold, with a superincumbent addition which gives a heavy and shapeless character to the entire column. Of the faces scarcely one remains entire, which very much impairs the effect doubtless intended to be produced by the universal presence of the face, characterized, as Sir F. Henniker remarks, by a "bewitching half modesty," which every where beamed upon the intoxicated worshipper of the genial power.

The great portico, comparatively a very modern specimen of Egyptian art, was added in the reign of Tiberius. "On its ceiling," observes Mr. Sharpe, "is the well-known zodiac, which our antiquaries once thought was of a great antiquity, but the sign of the Scales in the zodiac might alone have taught them that it could not be older than the reign of Augustus, who gave that name to the group of stars which before formed the spreading claws of the scorpion. We cannot but admire the zeal of the Egyptians by whom this work was then finished. They were treated as slaves by their Greek fellow-countrymen; they, the fallen descendants of the conquering kings of Thebes, had every third year their houses ransacked in search of arms: the Romans only drained the province of its wealth, and the temple

had perhaps never been heard of by the emperor, who could have been little aware that the most lasting monument of his reign was being raised in the distant province of Egypt. We cannot but admire a people, who, denying themselves all beyond the coarsest food and clothing as luxuries, thought a noble massive temple for the worship of the gods one of the first necessaries of life."

Briefly to describe the interior arrangements of the temple, we quote from Wilkinson.

To the great portico succeeds a hall of six columns with three rooms on either side: then a central chamber, communicating on one side with two small rooms, and on the other with a staircase. This is followed by another similar chamber, (with two rooms on the west and one on the east side,) immediately before the isolated sanctuary, which has a passage leading round it, and communicating with three rooms on either side. The total length of the temple is 93 paces, (or about 220 feet,) by 41, or across the portico 50.

Advancing through the gloom of the succeeding hall, we prepared to explore these smaller chambers and passages. Oppressed by a close foul odour, and not without apprehension of treading on snakes and scorpions concealed in the loose dust, we lighted our candles and began cautiously to descend; the bats, startled by the glare, roused from their obscure crannies, and madly flitting to and fro, with their slight curdling cry and the whizzing of their filthy wings, threatened to extinguish our lights, and dash their obscene bodies full into our averted faces,—an idea which even now inspires a shudder of disgust. Such was our welcome into these narrow dusky passages, once thronged with the votaries of a voluptuous and debasing superstition. Screening as well as might be our eyes from these attacks, we traced out with our candles the elaborate sculptures with which the walls are every where profusely covered throughout these numerous smaller rooms, all ministering to the impression designed to be produced upon the spectator.

In the smaller temple of Isis, behind the great temple, and in another, at some distance in front of it, are lateral columns bearing the distorted figure of a Typhonian monster, which so curiously contrasts with the head of Isis in the portico of the principal temple, as to have given rise to the impression, that it was dedicated to the evil genius of the Egyptians; but according to Wilkinson, this idea is erroneous, the building in question having also a relation to Athor.

The wood cut gives a sufficient general idea of the great temple. On the architrave is a procession to the goddess, and the flat sides of the building are relieved by enormous sculptures, which have, however, little or none of that historical or artistic interest attaching to those of Thebes.

We crossed by the ferry over the river to Keneh, having sent on the boat before. We had some difficulty in finding it among the many that lined the bank, for this is the most bustling place above Cairo, owing to its being the starting-point for the port of Cosseir on the Red Sea, three days across the desert, and more especially for the transport of the numerous pilgrims who now prefer this route for Mecca to the more toilsome one by way of Suez and Akaba. The supply of their wants creates much activity in the bazaars, and there is reason to fear that there are few of the pious Hadji who do not somewhat increase the amount of their transgressions at Keneh. Mr. St. John, in his rapturous description of the temple of Dendera, dedicated to the Egyptian Venus, says, that the power in whose honour it was built, still protects its fane from utter destruction. He might rather have said that, abandoning her ancient haunts to the owls and bats, she has simply crossed over the river, to establish her peculiar worship with an absence of all mystery, and even decency, by day as by night, among the thousand mud hovels of the modern town. "It is difficult to conjecture," says a reverend traveller, "what may have given to Keneh a distinction so peculiar and discreditable. Some people may think that its being a halting-place for the pilgrims is

almost enough to account for the mystery, since 'perils,' as Bacon remarks, 'commonly ask to be paid in pleasures.'"

We found that our pilgrim boat had preceded us, and recognised all our Mussulmen acquaintances in going about the town, who saluted us very courteously. They seemed quite superior to a large proportion of their brethren, a set of dirty fanatics, lounging about in the cafés, whose sallow visages were lengthened by the compulsory fast of the Ramadan. "Sufficiently disagreeable," says Hope, "as it might appear for every purpose of salvation when it falls in winter, the month of the Ramadan seems absolutely invented for the destruction of the Moslemin species when the procession of the lunar months brings it round to the longest and hottest days in summer. It is then that the Christian rising from a plenteous meal, if he has common prudence, avoids all intercourse whatever with the fasting Turk, whose devout stomach, void of all but sourness and bile, grumbles loudly over each chance-medley of the sort as over malice prepense, rises in anger at the supposed insult, and vents its acrimony in bitter invectives.

The fair companions of our pilgrims, whose glances from their boat had sometimes solaced me in the dreary absence of female charms upon the Nile, were lodged in the upper story of a sort of Khan, built by a wealthy and portly native. Of this building, the lower portion had a rude portico which opened on the river, and where a Frank or two in the employ of the pasha were wont to smoke away the tedious hours and look out for the passage of travellers, whose conversation might solace their compulsory banishment.

Here we had quite a levee. First came the aforesaid portly personage of dignified presence, who acted as agent to the English at Cosseir, and fulfilled in some sort the functions of a vice-consul. He was very complimentary, and begged to know if there was anything he could do for us. We brought forward the delinquencies of the Reis and sailors, with whom we had been of late abominably harassed, and he, in the hand-

somest way, offered to get them bastinadoed for us on our simple parole, and without the slightest inquiry, but this obliging proposal we thought fit to renounce. He then earnestly pressed us to sup with him, when we should be entertained with certain of the more peculiar and recherché exhibitions of the dancing-girls. This delicate compliment to our taste and morals we also declined, intending to depart at sun-set. It was little we could offer him for all these favours. Some bottles of porter were produced, which, however, he preferred to take away with him rather than consume upon the spot, and our notions of his magnificent liberality received a sad shock, when Salem whispered me next morning that he had *sold* them to the Italian doctors. Scarcely had he departed, before there came bowing in a brisk little Frenchman, about sixty, dry as a mummy, and as brown withal, dressed in a faded military suit of crimson and gold lace. He was, we found, an old colonel of Napoleon's, and had obtained from the pasha a grant of land, where he had established a little 'imperium in imperio' of his own. He ran on with all the lively politeness of his nation, told us that he had been long engaged in seeking coal for Mehemet Ali, and that he had no doubt that he had, *at last*, made the inestimable discovery, the search after which, by the-way, has cost already half of the revenue of a province.*

* The following statement is making the round of the newspapers, and if true is of vast importance to Egypt. We may soon hope to have steamers on the Upper Nile. The writer was acquainted with the French engineer alluded to, whom he met both on the Nile and on his return to Europe, when he spoke very confidently of his researches in this neighbourhood. "The *Journal des Debats* announces in a letter from Grand Cairo, the discovery, by a French civil engineer, of a stratum of coal in the vicinity of the Nile, towards Upper Egypt. Two engineers, an Englishman and a Frenchman, were employed to investigate the lands in the vicinity of the Nile for the discovery of coal about three years ago; but these superficial inquirers reported that there was none, and that, moreover, none would be found! The French engineer first mentioned, more diligent and more skilful than his predecessors, has completely overthrown this bold assertion. The samples have been referred to a commission, and the excavations will be continued on a large scale."

"But," added the little man, "*entre nous*, it is not for the pasha, but for *you English*, that I am doing all this, for it is agreed, of course, that you are to have possession of the country." To this speech, which reminded me of Talleyrand's celebrated saying, that speech was given to man for the purpose of *disguising* his thoughts, I did not of course feel called upon to say anything in reply. The Italian doctors in the service of the pasha also did us the honour of a visit. In fact, besides the desire to lighten their captivity by conversing with a passing stranger, they have an eye to a little private practice, and generally add a trifle to their slender pay by the infirmities of European travellers, or the peccadilloes of Mahommedan pilgrims. So much for Keneh, the most dissolute place in Egypt, upon which, after a very brief stay, we were happy enough to turn our backs.

CHAPTER V.

THEBES.—ITS HISTORY.—LIBYAN SUBURB.—TOMBS OF THE KINGS.—MEDEENET HABOU.—MEMNONIUM.—LUXOR AND KARNAK.

AND now, full of glowing anticipation, which in travel, as in everything else, carries with it half the charm of existence, we spread our sails to a favouring breeze, and started on the last stage of our cruise;—a few hours, and Thebes with all its wonders would open before us. Hardly had Keneh faded from our vision, ere we opened a view of the site of ancient Coptos, and could look far across the eastern desert in the direction of that old and well-beaten commercial route to Berenice on the Red Sea, by which the riches of the far east were once conveyed to the Nile, and thence floated down to Alexandria.

Our progress by no means kept pace with my impatience, the breezes became light and languid, and sometimes dying away, left us becalmed under the burning noontide heat. Even the stimulus of a promised lamb upon the evening of our arrival could hardly induce the poor fasting sailors (it was the Ramadan) to resume the toilsome process of tracking. As we thus slowly advanced, about noon we began to open the immense plain of Thebes, and to catch glimpses of its distant ruins. It was wholly unlike what I had anticipated. The expanse is so vast, miles intervening between the different groups of ruin, that a sense of void and emptiness was substituted for that lively and powerful effect I had expected would be produced by the first coup d'œil of the ruined city. There were, indeed, Karnak and Luxor on the eastern side, the Memnonium and

Medeenet Habou on the western, with the hoary, awful Colossi, lonely landmarks in the midst of the plain; but the effect of these objects was lost by distance. The only grand feature was the lofty barren mountain of yellow sandstone overhanging the western quarter of the city, with the dark orifices of its countless tombs, and which seemed to reverberate the ardent rays of the vertical sun.

If the eye was not gratified by this feeling of utter and mournful vacancy, the mind, perhaps, was not the less impressed. The river, once gay with numerous vessels, poured silently down under the golden heat of noon; but our own bark alone lazily cleft its waters. No buildings appeared on the river-side, save on the western bank a solitary hovel, overhung by a stunted sycamore tree, our destined landing-place. To this the exhausted sailors made fast the boat, put out a plank, and in a few moments were fallen fast asleep in the shadow of the old tree. The plain around us lay in breathless silence and sultry heat; the mountains colourless as if calcined; the distant temples like the blackened wrecks of a conflagration; the palms, smitten by the sun, scarcely rustled their languid leaves; the vegetation was parched, the over-arching sky of intense oppressive brightness. For a long time not a sound reached us. From the shadow of the cabin I watched for some signs of the inhabitants, but for a long while not a being appeared in sight, till suddenly I saw, spurring towards the landing-place, a whole tribe of Ciceroni, donkey-boys and vendors of curiosities, who, from their sepulchral dwellings in the distant cliffs of Gornou, had descried our boat, and were all eager to welcome and profit by the earliest traveller of the season. The appearance of these gentry was highly picturesque; their faces and heavy features of Coptic mould—dark, almost to blackness—were set off by large turbans; their long brown robes relieved by a sort of plaid shawl of gay and varied colours, and gracefully wreathed about their shoulders. There was a general rush into the boat, and testimonials from preceding travellers, scraps of papyrus and mummy cases,

coins, scarabæi, &c., most suspiciously modern in appearance, were thrust into our hands. All the trade and business of modern Thebes was at once before us; it had moved down from the tombs of Gornou to the river's bank, for the sole object of extracting a few piastres from the purse of a solitary traveller.

Such was our approach to this great city, the origin of which is too remote to be within the ken of history. The older monuments of Theban sculpture, says Mr. Sharpe, who, it should be remembered, is one of the most cautious of Egyptian inquirers, teach us the names of numerous kings of Thebes, as also of Memphis, and of the Arab or Phenician shepherds; and though there may be doubts as to the order in which these early dynasties are to be placed, yet they leave us in no doubt as to the high antiquity which must be granted to this earliest of nations. Greek history begins with the Trojan war. Jewish history begins seven hundred years earlier, with the migration of Abraham from Chaldæa; but even when this father of the Hebrew nation led his herds to drink of the waters of the Nile, Egypt was already a highly civilized country. It was after the fall of This, or Abydos, that Thebes rose to be the capital of Upper Egypt; and it was, perhaps, in the reign of the second or third Theban king that Abraham entered the Delta. Osirtesen I., who raised the obelisk at Heliopolis, is the first great name in the history of Thebes; he was the builder of the older and smaller part of the temple of Karnak, which served as the nucleus around which his successors grouped other and more colossal additions. This early Theban monarchy was, in fact, a religious community, in which the palace was a temple, the people worshippers at the gate, and the monarch the chief priest. The dynasty of Osirtesen was terminated by the conquest of Upper Egypt by the Memphite monarchs who erected the pyramids.

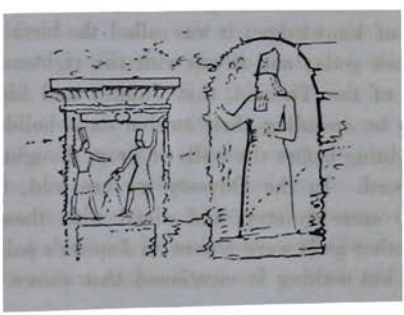
The irruption of the shepherd kings who conquered Memphis, extended also to Thebes, over which they obtained a temporary mastery. Amosis, king of Thebes, had the glory of

driving these barbarian invaders from the Egyptian soil; and from his reign we may date the rise of Upper Egypt to its palmiest state of political supremacy and splendour. The palaces, temples, and tombs of Thebes now increased in size and beauty with each succeeding monarch. Amunothph, Thothmosis, and especially the beautiful Nitocris, the last of the race of the Memphite sovereigns, by whose marriage with Thothmosis Upper and Lower Egypt were united, continued to make important additions to the temple at Karnak. Nitocris also built the temple or palace, now called Dayr el Bahree, at the foot of the Libyan hills, being the most westerly temple in Thebes, at the extremity of the Assaseef (*see plan*). A straight Dromos, or avenue, sixteen hundred feet long, between a double row of sphynxes, now destroyed, led from the first gateway of this temple to the first court; a second slope of three hundred and fifty feet further, is the doorway into the inner court; three hundred further, the second granite doorway, leading into the small vaulted rooms, and the chambers tunnelled into the mountain-side. Thothmosis III., her successor, also added greatly to the magnificence of Karnak, as also to other parts of Egypt. The sculptures in the tombs display a procession of seventeen nations, comprising Abyssinians, Ethiopians, Arabians, and Asiatic nations bordering on the Nile, who are bringing their costly gifts in homage to this king. To him is attributed the formation of the lake of Mœris. The Theban monarchy had now reached its full extent, comprising Upper and Lower Egypt with Ethiopia. To Thothmosis succeeded Amunothph II., in whose reign some place the Exodus of the Israelites. His grandson, Amunothph III., added to the temple of Karnak, and also commenced that of Luxor: it is his statue, now called the "Vocal Memnon," which first salutes the traveller as he approaches Thebes, like a venerable land-mark in history. The tomb of Amunothph is one of the oldest and most extensive. Rameses I. soon followed Amunothph, and with his family the glory of Thebes arose to its utmost height. His son, Oimenepthah,

erected the stupendous hall of Karnak, the walls of which are covered with the most spirited sculptures in Egypt, representing his Asiatic conquests. He storms their cities among the mountains, and leads back his prisoners in triumph to the temple of Amun Ka. The river Nile is known in this sculpture by the crocodiles swimming about in it, and the bridge over it is, perhaps, the earliest met with in history. The tomb of this king, which we shall presently describe, is the most beautiful in Egypt, the paintings being almost as fresh and vivid as at the day of their execution.

Amunmai Rameses II., the son of the last king, was the monarch under whom Upper Egypt rose to its greatest height in arms, in arts, and in wealth. He finished the palace of the Memnonium or Miamunei, at Abydos, so called from his own name, Miamun, or Amunmai. He also finished the temple of Osiris in the same city, and on one of the walls he carved that list of his forefathers, now in the British Museum, which is known by the name of the tablet of Abydos, a monument which has guided us safely in this history through seventeen reigns. He added to Osirtesen's old temple at Karnak, and finished Amunothph's temple at Luxor, and his father's temple at Old Quorneh. Thus Thebes had already four large fortified temples or palaces, the three just mentioned and that of queen Nitocris at Dahr el Bahree; and to these Rameses II. added a new palace, which, like that of Abydos, was by the Greeks called the Memnonium. In the first court-yard was a colossal statue of himself, larger than any other in Egypt; and in the second yard were two smaller statues, from one of which was taken the colossal head now in the British Museum. The spacious rooms, with the columns which once upheld the roofs, are still gazed on with wonder by our travellers, and were standing in all their glory when Hecatæus travelled in Upper Egypt. He praises the inscription over the library door, which called the books the medicine of the mind. Carved and painted on the walls of the Memnonium are the king's victories

over negroes and Ethiopians, over Arabs, and over a people whose single lock of hair on a shorn head proves that they were of a Tartar or Scythian race; and the artists, not content, like Homer, with making the hero a head and shoulders taller than the soldiers that stand around him, usually paint the conquering monarch as twenty times as tall as the pigmy enemy, whom he is destroying at a single blow. The hieroglyphics which were read to Germanicus by one of the priests in the reign of Tiberius, recounted the Egyptian victories over the Libyans and Ethiopians of Africa, the Medes, Persians, Bactrians, Scythians, Syrians, and Armenians of the East; and the Cappadocians, Bithynians, and Lycians of Asia Minor; together with the weight of gold and silver, and the other gifts, which these nations sent to Thebes as their yearly tribute. The march of Rameses through Palestine is not mentioned in the Old Testament; but this may have arisen from his keeping close to the coast, a part of the country not then held by the Jews. The Hebrew nation was then in its infancy, ruled over by its judges, or, perhaps, at the time living in servitude under the Midianites or Canaanites. They had not yet gained possession of Jerusalem, their future capital, nor conquered the Philistines and Phœnicians of the coast; and probably, the march of this Egyptian army weakened the power of these enemies of the Jews, and helped the latter to the conquest of the land of Canaan. Rameses left monuments behind him in the countries



which he conquered, and one of these still remains in Syria near Beyrout, side by side with a similar memorial of a Persian or Assyrian conqueror. On his return home from Thrace along the northern shores of the Black Sea, he left a colony of soldiers on the Phasis at Colchis, an action which Herodotus gives to Sesostris; and Rameses II. was succeeded by three kings of lesser note, after whom came Rameses III., who built the palace temple of Medeenet Habou, which we shall presently describe. He too was a great conqueror, as the sculptures abundantly testify. With him terminates the glory of this old race of Coptic kings. Under his successors Thebes gradually sunk; its kings lost possession of Lower Egypt, and were even vassals of the distant kings of Bubastis and Tanis in the Delta. The power of Thebes ends in obscurity; and history is unable to fix the date when it ceased to be the capital of Egypt; but we must suppose, that its fall and the want of records were caused and accompanied by civil war.

During the past centuries of Theban greatness, the country was little known to either Jews or Greeks, the two people in whose writings we naturally hope to find information. In the Hebrew Scriptures Upper Egypt is scarcely mentioned; while by the Greeks it was only spoken of with ignorant wonder. In the Iliad, Thebes is called the richest city in the world, having a hundred gates, through each of which two hundred warriors issued in their war-chariots to battle and to victory. But it was to Homer wholly in the land of fable, far beyond the reach of knowledge; it was called the birth-place of some of the Greek gods; and it was with the righteous Ethiopians, or people of the Thebaid, that Jupiter and his family were thought to be spending their twelve days' holidays, when the Greeks, fighting before the walls of Troy, thought their prayers were unheard. In the Odyssey we are told, that Neptune visited the same country, and dined with these Ethiopians, while the other gods were absent in Jupiter's palace on Mount Olympus; but nothing is mentioned that shows that the poet

knew anything of the places which he writes about. Hesiod also, when speaking of Memnon, king of Ethiopia, by whom he meant either Amunothph III. of the musical statue, or Miamun Rameses II., calls him the son of the goddess Aurora. Everything in Egypt was seen by the Greeks enlarged through the mists of distance, and coloured by the poetic fancy of ignorance.

As Thebes declined, Lower Egypt had been gradually increasing in power, and the first of its monarchs who sat on the throne of Rameses was Shishank of Bubastis, the Shishak of the Bible, and the contemporary of Solomon, against whose son Rehoboam he marched with a large army, and brought to Thebes the golden shields with which Solomon had adorned the temple at Jerusalem. This exploit, as we shall see, is carved on the walls of Karnak. After various intestine convulsions, the Ethiopians, formerly tributaries of Thebes, now became its conquerors. This people had, indeed, been ruled by Copts, and their language and religion was the same as those of Thebes. Bocchoris the Wise, of Sais, long remembered for his mild and merciful laws, was put to death, and by Sabacothph, the Ethiopian, who reigned eight years in Egypt. Assyria was now become a powerful monarchy, and pressed Samaria and Judæa, who looked in vain for succour to Egypt. Tirhakah, the third of the Ethiopian kings, reigned in Egypt while Hezekiah reigned in Judæa, Sennacherib in Assyria, and Mardoch Empadus in Babylon; and here, with the recorded Babylonian eclipses, begins a fixed point in chronology, from which the dates of *preceding* events must be calculated.

Under the last of the Ethiopian kings, who was succeeded by Egyptians, the seat of government was transferred to Sais in the Delta. Egypt was now no longer the same, the valour of the Coptic warriors was sunk, and Greek mercenaries were employed by Necho Hophra and the other monarchs of Lower Egypt. Henceforth, Thebes entirely lost its political importance, but it still retained all the original grandeur of its colossal monuments.

The reigns of these kings of Lower Egypt was soon brought to a close by the invasion of Cambyses. After his conquest of Memphis he advanced to the conquest of Ethiopia, but more like a madman than a general. On reaching Thebes he detached a body of 50,000 men to reduce first the great oasis, and next the oasis of Ammon. The first they reached, but no tidings were ever afterwards heard of them, they perished amidst the sands of the Libyan desert. The Persian monarch had been compelled to turn back from his progress towards Ethiopia by famine, and on his reaching Thebes, he wreaked his disappointment upon the devoted city. He overthrew the massive walls of the temples, set fire to what would burn, hurled prostrate the statues of the great Coptic kings, broke open and plundered their tombs, and carried off an enormous booty.

This was the first great blow received by Thebes, but she gradually arose to much of her original splendour, though her political importance was gone. The conquest of Egypt by the Ptolemies entirely withdrew the commerce which formerly centred in the Thebaid, by means of the routes across the desert to the Nile, to the more favoured emporium of Alexandria.

Loose and high-coloured accounts of the wealth of Thebes had reached Greece even before the time of Homer; and again through Herodotus and other travellers in the Delta; but nothing was certainly known of it till it was visited by Hecatæus of Abdera. Hecatæus had been an officer in the army of Alexander, and he afterwards joined himself to Ptolemy; but he is best known as an author. Among other works, he wrote a history of the Hyperborean or northern nations, and also a history, or rather a description, of Egypt, part of which we now read in the pages of Diodorus Siculus. He was perhaps the only mortal who, travelling to the most remote points both of the north and of the south, ever saw and compared the temple of the Sun in Thebes with the druidical temple of the same god at Stonehenge in Britain, before ruin had overthrown those

vast buildings. When he travelled in Upper Egypt, Thebes, though still a populous city, was more thought of by the antiquary than by the statesman. Its wealth, however, was still great; and when, under the just government of Ptolemy, it was no longer necessary for the priests to hide their treasures, it was found that the temples still held the very large sum of three hundred talents of gold and two thousand three hundred talents of silver, or above one million sterling, which had escaped the plundering hands of the Persian satraps.

The Memnonium, the great palace of Rameses II., was then standing; and though it has been plundered by the Persians, the building itself was unhurt. Its massive walls had scarcely felt the wear of the centuries which had rolled over them. Hecatæus measured its rooms, its court-yards, and its avenue of sphynxes; and by his measurements we can now distinguish its ruins from those of the other palaces of Thebes. One of its rooms, perhaps after the days of its builder, had been fitted up for a library, and held the histories and records of the priests; but the golden zodiac or circle, on which were engraved the days of the year, with the stars which were seen to rise at sun-rise and set at sun-set, by which each day was known, had been taken away by Cambyses. Hecatæus also saw the three other palace-temples of Thebes, which we now call by the names of the villages in which they stand, namely, of Luxor, of Karnak, and of Medeenet Habou.

The Theban priests showed Hecatæus the large wooden mummy-cases of their predecessors, standing upright round the walls of the temple, to the number of three hundred and forty-five; and, when the Greek traveller boasted that he was the sixteenth in descent from Jupiter, they told him that those three hundred and forty-five priests had ruled Thebes in succession from father and son, each a mortal the son of a mortal, and that it was that number of generations since the gods Osiris and Horus had reigned in Egypt. Nations, like families, have usually been fond of claiming to be descended from a long line

of ancestors, but none have ever had a better right to that boast than the Egyptians. The Theban priest was speaking to Hecatæus in about the fortieth reign of this history, while his Greek visitor only pretended to be the sixteenth in descent from the gods. The Theban could then name with certainty more sovereigns of his country in the order of succession than we can kings of England. He was as far removed from the obscurity of antiquity as we English are in the nineteenth century. It is true that he boasted that the oldest of his mummies was ten times older than it is likely to have been; but if he had confined himself to what we think the truth, his boast would still have been very remarkable, and he could probably have pointed to records standing around him which had existed some centuries before the time of Abraham.

The Ptolemies added to the magnificence of Thebes as well as of all parts of Egypt. They made various additions to the temples, and the most magnificent Pylon or gateway at Karnak owes its origin to Ptolemy. We may notice here that architecture was somewhat modified by Greek taste — the columns of the temple being more elongated and elegant, the capitals more varied, and the general effect lighter and more graceful. Sculpture had greatly degenerated. The reign of Ptolemy Lathyrus is remarkable for the rebellion of Thebes, and for the final consummation of her ruin. It had long been falling in trade and wealth, and had lost its superiority in arms; but its temples, like so many citadels, its obelisks, its colossal statues, and the tombs of its great kings, yet remained, and with them the memory of its bygone glory. The Thebans had borne for two centuries and a half, under their Greek masters, political servitude, heavy taxes, habitual arrogance, and occasional cruelty. Under the government of Cleopatra Cocce the measure of their injuries overflowed, and taking advantage of the revolutions in Alexandria, a large part of Upper Egypt rose in rebellion. When Lathyrus returned to Egypt, Thebes refused her obedience. For three years the brave Copts, in-

trenched within their temples, every one of which was a castle, withstood his armies; but the bows, the hatchets, and the chariots could do little against Greek arms; while the overthrow of the massive temple walls and the utter ruin of the city prove how slowly they yielded to greater skill and numbers, and mark the conqueror's distrust, lest the temples should again be so made use of. Perhaps the only time before Thebes had been stormed after a long siege, was when it first fell under the Persians, and the ruin which marked the footsteps of Cambyses had never been wholly repaired. But the wanton cruelty of the foreigners did little mischief when compared with the unpitying and unforgiving distrust of the native conquerors. The temples of Tentyra, Apollinopolis, Latopolis, and Philæ show that the massive Egyptian buildings can, when let alone, withstand the wear of time for thousands of years; but the harder hand of man works much faster, and the wide acres of Theban ruins prove alike the greatness of the city and the force with which it was overthrown: and this is the last time that Egyptian Thebes is met with in the pages of history. The habitations of the city were swept away, but the temples, miles apart, form the nuclei of different scattered hamlets, whose inhabitants till the plain, once covered with the living millions of the ancient city. The Christians under the Greek emperors raised their puny structures amidst the colossal courts of Medeenet Habou, but fled on the conquest of the Arabs, whose degenerate successors make their habitation amidst the tombs of Gornou, and gain a precarious subsistence by rifling their contents, or dragging from their repositories the mummied remains of their tenants.

But the ruined temples still stand to call forth the wonder of the traveller. They have seen the whole portion of time of which history keeps the reckoning roll before them; they have seen kingdoms and nations rise and fall—the Babylonians, the Jews, the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans. They have seen the childhood of all that we call ancient, and they still

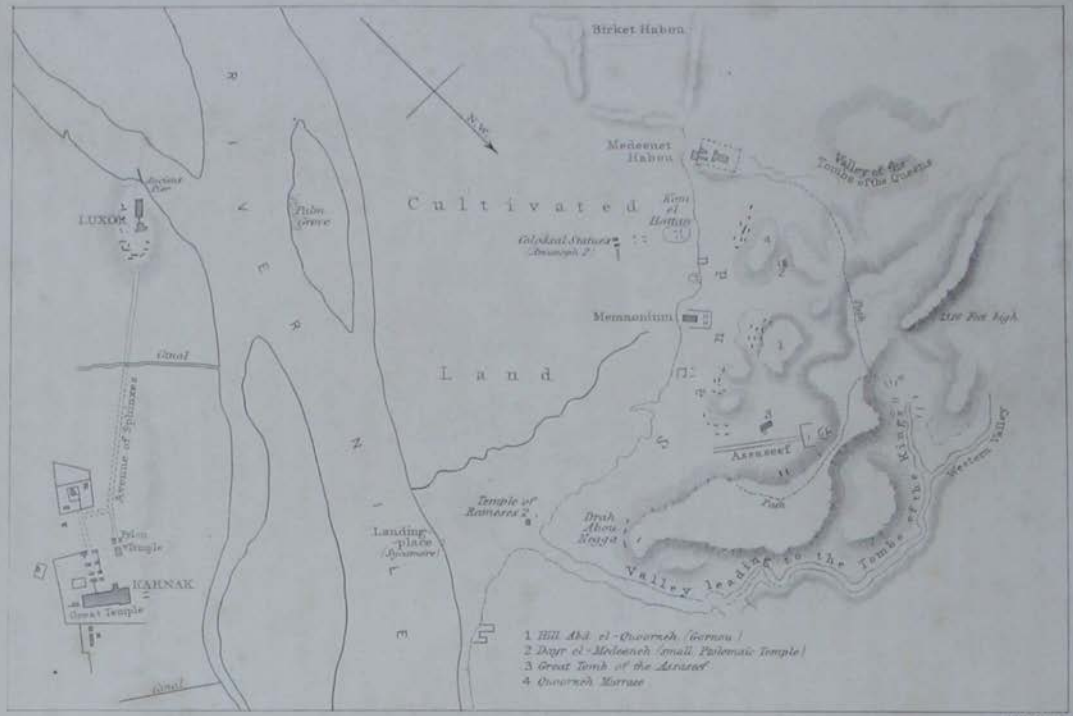
seem likely to stand, to tell their tale to those who will hereafter call us the ancients.

It is well to remind the reader that my promise was but to "glance" at Thebes, to give a general impression of the site, and a few views of the most remarkable monuments, in fact, rather to excite than satisfy an interest in the subject. To describe the buildings in detail would be an endless task; such descriptions, besides, would be equally uninteresting and unintelligible without a far more numerous collection of views than can be given here; and still the tombs, perhaps the most wonderful objects, and the most interesting in a historical and antiquarian point of view, must ever remain without adequate illustration. In fact, nothing but a most elaborate series of copies of the sculptures and paintings they contain, which would alone fill volumes, could give to the reader any idea of them; and to describe them in detail would be no less than to describe the religion, manners, and customs of ancient Egypt. The results of long and persevering study of these authentic memorials of the past, assisted by learning and genius, may be seen in the work of Sir Gardner Wilkinson on this subject; there a vast number of details, which the traveller sees but in succession, without any clue to their connexion, have been reduced to order, and illustrated by comparison with history, which in its turn has received a new light; and thus, in these invaluable volumes, all the splendour of ancient Egypt and of Thebes is brought up most vividly before us,—the pride, pomp, and circumstance of the old warrior kings, the splendid ceremonial of the worship that once filled these vacant temples, and the luxury of the private dwellings, of which not a trace now remains. Through his erudite researches, the strange gods and goddesses of the Egyptian mythology, which every where meet our gaze on the walls of these temples, are no longer regarded merely as objects of the idolatry of the vulgar, but assume a symbolical meaning, as embodied attributes of the universal cause; as they did

at least to the minds of that learned priesthood, with whom the secrets of science, as well as of religion, were deposited. Such is the best description of Thebes, one which deduces its past magnificence from the existing wonders of its tombs and temples. Mine is but the humble effort of a tourist, to walk over the field which the learning and research of others has rendered so fruitful, and give a few impressions, and those necessarily imperfect ones, of its actual appearance to the eye.

It may be as well here to explain, what it is that has enabled the student of Egyptian antiquities to make such surprising progress within the course of the last quarter of a century. The sculptures and paintings on the monuments were of course equally palpable before that time; but the key to their explanation, that is, the power of deciphering the hieroglyphic inscriptions, every where accompanying them, was wanting. The first impulse to the study was given by the expedition of Napoleon, and the publications of the French savans, which awakened the attention of the learned, and many shrewd, and many absurd guesses were made as to the import of these mysterious signs. By little and little, a nearer approximation was made to the truth, the discovery of which was mainly owing to the finding of the Rosetta stone, now in the British Museum. This fragment, as most of our readers are aware, contains a broken trilinguar inscription, in hieroglyphic or figurative—Demotic or written character, and ordinary Greek characters. The Greek inscription being proved to be a translation, attention was next directed with intense earnestness to the second or Demotic one. The first discovery was of the groups of signs denoting proper names, such as Ptolemy, Alexander, &c., and that these signs were also letters. The corresponding symbols in the first or hieroglyphic inscription were now the next objects of attention; and Dr. Young, in 1819, at length made known his identification of the names of "Ptolemy" and "Berenice," and of the nature of several of the symbolic letters, thus giving the first clue to subsequent discovery. But it was

PLAIN OF THEBES



not till 1822 that the discovery was pushed further by Champollion le Jeune, who read at Paris a memoir demonstrating that "the ancient Egyptians had made use of pure hieroglyphic signs, that is, of characters representing the image of material objects, to represent simply the *sounds* of the *names* of *Greek* and *Roman* sovereigns, inscribed upon the monuments, which method he inferred to have been also adopted at the most early period. In 1824, he published his "Statement of the Hieroglyphic System of the Ancient Egyptians," in which he showed that, even in the most ancient times, the greater portion of these signs or figures of material objects were phonetic—reducible into a regular alphabet; and that the hieroglyphic mode of writing is complex, being at once figurative, i. e. descriptive by representations of objects discussed, symbolical, and phonetic, or descriptive by signs intended to represent sounds.

Furnished with the key to their long-hidden mysteries, several Egyptian travellers undertook the examination of the monuments of Egypt. The French government sent out Champollion, and the Tuscan, Rosellini, who agreed to labour in concert. They pursued their explorations as far as Nubia, and it was agreed that they should publish together the results of their journey. Champollion, however, died before his portion was concluded, and left to his colleague the task of introducing their labours to the world, which has since been done in a magnificent publication. Meanwhile the English antiquaries had not been idle; Sir Gardner Wilkinson having issued the work to which we have already alluded, and Messrs. Burton and Birch have also laboured in the field of palæography. Prussia also sent out the young but erudite Lepsius, to prosecute still further researches, the full results of which have not yet been brought before the public. So mighty have been the consequences from the discovery of one single fragment of stone!

The annexed map (from an original survey by a friend) will serve to explain the details that follow. It will be there seen,

that the most colossal of all the ruins, that of Karnak, is on the eastern bank, together with Luxor; yet though the ruins on the western bank are inferior in scale, this deficiency is more than made up in interest by the tombs, and the general impressiveness of the scene of desolation around them. The goddess Athor, the Venus of the Egyptians, whose magnificent temple at Dendera we have so lately noticed, presided over the western quarter of Thebes, and from her this suburb derived its name of Pathyris, belonging to Athor. She was figuratively represented in the paintings as a spotted cow, living behind the western mountain of Thebes, from which, figured in this shape, she is seen rising as the planet Venus. It was into her arms that the sun, as he sunk behind the mountain, was poetically supposed to be received, and in this character answered also to Night.*

I arranged to visit the tombs of the kings the following day, and spent the evening in riding about the environs of the landing. The first object of interest that meets the eye, is the small temple of old Koorneh, of the time of Rameses II., of which I have presented no illustration, as, though interesting to the antiquary, it is not among the most remarkable or colossal of the monuments of Thebes.

The craggy range of the western mountains which overhang the desolate city were ruddy with the reflected hues of a glorious dawn; but the river and plain were still cool and shadowy, when I stepped from our boat on shore, and found our guide and donkeys waiting for us under the old sycamore. We mounted, and hastened forward at a gallop; but, leaving the green border of the Nile, were soon brought up by some yawning mummy-holes and obscure pits, often of great depth, with which the whole plain is covered, and picked our way through this intricate and dreary chaos of sepulchral excavations with greater caution. At length we had passed them, and entered upon a valley running up into the heart of the mountains, quite in the rear of Thebes, and remote from any connexion with its

* Wilkinson.

VALLEY OF THE TOMBS OF THE KINGS.

site. The farther we penetrated into this dreary ravine, the more desolate became its features; arid rocks, whitening in the sun, overhung its narrow sandy bed; there was no vestige of vegetable life; and through these barren and melancholy portals we seemed to be penetrating to the very grave of nature. After tracking the defile for half an hour, the bed of the ravine, which had gradually narrowed, divided into several obscure clifts, which penetrated into the bowels of the sandstone mountain, and a range of gloomy perpendicular precipices forbade all further progress. At the foot of this melancholy barrier, we descried a few dark apertures, like entrances to subterranean caverns, singularly gloomy and mysterious in effect; in the rocky walls of the lateral fissures we gradually made out others, and these were entrances of those wonderful tombs which the kings of mighty Thebes made for themselves in "desolate places," many of which still remain hidden from research among the deep chasms of this funereal region.

The sandy valley, with the reflection from the arid cliffs, began to grow glaring and oppressive as we stood at the head of the flight of steps which descends steeply into the principal tomb. It is not without awe that we penetrate by this ruined staircase into the abode of death, the shadows fall deeper as we descend, and the faint blue light from above just enables us to make out the sculptures on the dusky walls which line the passage—hieroglyphics relating to the owner of the tomb, and figures emblematical of the passage into the realms of futurity. Here the guides lighted their candles, and we advanced into the first and most celebrated "Hall of Beauty." At the foot of this passage was formerly a wall, and on the other side the masonry built up to conceal the entrance to the wonders within; but Belzoni, suspecting from different indications that more was beyond, forced in the wall with the trunk of a palm, and burst into the splendid chambers so artfully concealed. His emotions may well be envied, as he first viewed the many figures, in all the freshness of yesterday's colouring, with which the walls of

this apartment are every where covered. Its scale indeed, after the vague language of some writers, may a little disappoint the traveller, who has perhaps looked for a boundless "hall of Eblis" in the interior of these sepulchres; but nothing can be more wonderful than to see, as the light of the torch is applied successively to the dusky walls, group after group, of the most elaborate execution and vivid colouring, start successively into life, most of which are yet full of mysteries, even to those who have pored half a life over their hidden mythological import. This hall is supported by four square columns, on which Osirei, father of Rameses II., is represented in presence of different divinities, the roof is covered with golden stars, and the walls represent processions of a very singular character, some personages bearing on their shoulders the folds of an enormous serpent; but the most remarkable consists of four different groups, each consisting of four persons, of different features and complexions, alternately red, white, black, and white again, which to Wilkinson assume a peculiar signification: the red being intended to express the Egyptians; the next, a bearded northern people, with whom they were often at war, to testify the north; as do the blacks, the regions of the south; and the other white people in costume the oriental nations.

An adjacent chamber, the paintings of which are unfinished, supported by two pillars, affords an opportunity of seeing the figures sketched on, before wrought out by the labour of the chisel, and elaborately painted: these outlines are very bold and masterly. We now proceed deeper into the recesses of the sepulchre, the chambers of which are not in a line, as is usually the case; a staircase at the nearest end of the inner wall conducts to two passages, and another chamber, into the great hall, which is rather larger than the one first entered, and having six pillars instead of four, with two lateral apartments, and at the extremity an oblong covered saloon, in the midst of which, on the summit of an inclined plane and staircases, extending deep into the

THE HALL OF BEAUTY.

rock, and part of which is filled up with fallen earth, stood, when Belzoni entered, the celebrated sarcophagus, which held the body of the monarch, now in the museum of Sir J. Soane. Connected with this hall are other small chambers, in one of which are sculptures which startle the uninitiated, appearing to some to cast the reproach of human sacrifice upon the Egyptian religion, though these are believed by antiquaries to have an emblematic signification, as have most of the other sculptures, relating to the future passage of the soul through different stages of existence.

The entire extent of this astonishing succession of chambers and passages is hollowed to a length of 320 feet into the heart of the rock, and they are every where covered with the same subjects, a large proportion of which are of mythological signification, only to be unfolded, if ever, by the long and persevering scrutiny of the scholar. To the ordinary visitor they are sealed records; he gazes with vacant wonder on the combinations of strange sculpture that mock him from the walls, the abstruse symbols of a religion whose deeper mysteries elude research. Yet, without entering too deeply into this subject, it may be remarked, that the doctrine of the judgment and the future life is plainly depicted on the Egyptian monuments, as will be

seen from the annexed copy of a portion of the sarcophagus taken from this tomb, wherein Osiris is represented as sitting on his throne, weighing the actions of the departed, an unhappy soul, who for his sins has passed into the body of a pig, being carried away in a boat.

In other sculptures, as well as in the papyrus "Book of the Dead" in the Turin Museum, the doctrine is more fully elaborated. The soul was supposed to be dormant until the mummification of the body was completed, when, after various adventures, it ascended to the hall of Osiris, appearing on its way before the forty-two assessors, each challenging it to prove its innocence of a particular sin, in which, if it is successful, it receives its due award, and passes into the regions of the blest. In the great serpent, to which allusion has already been made, and which is also found represented on this sarcophagus as overcome, and conquered, and borne on the shoulders of men, we see perhaps some remote analogy with the doctrine of the book of Genesis.

The formation of costly tombs was encouraged by the priesthood, who derived thence additional influence, and many years would sometimes be consumed in the elaborate decoration of his future abode, by its wealthy proprietor. Nothing could exceed the magnificence of the funeral obsequies of a virtuous monarch. A general mourning for seventy-two days and a solemn fast was proclaimed, and numerous processions of mourners through the streets extolled the virtues of the deceased. Some idea of the splendour of the funeral procession of a king may be formed from various representations of those of wealthy individuals. The most beautiful feature was the passage of the sacred lake. After a long procession of servants, and mourners, and priests bearing offerings, shrines, flowers, &c., and of wailing women beating their breasts, and who, like those described in Scripture, cast dust upon their heads, came the sarcophagus bearing the corpse. On reaching the lake, the sarcophagus was transferred to the consecrated

boat—of elegant and graceful form, and others scarcely less splendid conveyed the rest of the mourners to the opposite shore, forming, as depicted in the tombs, a most magnificent spectacle. Here the procession was again formed to convey the body to the tomb, on reaching which the sarcophagus was placed erect in the chamber, while a priest performed a sacrifice, and the nearest relatives, with loud wailings, extolled the virtues of the deceased, which were repeated by the rest of the mourners.

We read in Scripture that the wicked kings of Israel were not allowed to be "gathered to the sepulchres of their fathers" with honour. Such was also the case with certain of the Egyptian kings. When, after the embalming of the body and a variety of ceremonies, the coffin was brought to the brink of the sacred lake, to be ferried over to his tomb, a sort of preliminary trial of the deceased took place, who might be deprived of an honourable funeral, and of admission to the consecrated sepulchres, by public and unanswerable testimony to his crimes.

As we emerge from these dark halls, scarcely illuminated by candles or the fires of straw and brush, which the reckless traveller lights in their recesses, what a contrast is there to the blinding day above—the burning sand and rock of the desolate valley, more sad than the sepulchres hollowed in its rocky sides. I was glad to escape from it again into the neighbouring tomb, called after the celebrated Bruce, whose description of a harper upon its walls occasioned so much ridicule and reproach. This is not so irregular as the one described, nor are the chambers so numerous or intricate, but it pierces 405 feet on a more gradual slope into the mountain-side. The sculptures are more intelligible and interesting to the unlearned visitor, for they exhibit domestic and culinary usages—different boats, arms and armour, furniture of all descriptions; agricultural scenes, birds, fruits, and other natural productions; with a clearness and minuteness equally amusing and startling; for these familiar representations are not less than 2000 years old,

and bear testimony, no less than other more marvellous sculptures and monuments, to the high state of civilization existing at that time among the ancient Egyptians; even on a cursory glance, they enable us to build up in idea the perished palaces of Thebes, and to furnish them with all the appliances and means which elegance and luxury, guided by taste, could suggest or create, to fill their halls with the sound of music and revelry.

Another of the most remarkable of the tombs, is that which appears on the right hand of the annexed view; the descent is more gradual than in the others, and of course more elegant; but it does not produce that impression of wonder and mystery occasioned by the tomb of Belzoni. We learn, from various inscriptions, that it was much admired by Greek and Roman visitors. Beside these, there are numerous others open; and in the western branch of the ravine, that of Amunothph III., of the vocal statue, the oldest king whose tomb has yet been discovered; and it is here that Wilkinson supposes the most ancient sepulchres yet remain to be discovered.

"When Hecatæus," says Mr. Sharpe, "visited Egypt in the reign of Ptolemy, many of these tombs had even then been opened to gratify the curiosity of the learned or the greediness of the conqueror. Forty-seven royal tombs were mentioned in the records of the priests, of which the entrances had been covered up with earth and hidden in the sloping sides of the hills, in the hope that they might remain undisturbed and unplundered, and might keep safe the embalmed bodies of the kings till they should arise again at the end of the world; and seventeen of these had already been found and broken open. Hecatæus was told, that the other tombs had been before destroyed; and we owe it, perhaps, to this mistake, that they remained unopened for more than two thousand years longer, to reward the researches of modern travellers, and to unfold to us the history of their builders."

The sun was getting high when we prepared to leave this

PLAIN OF THEBES.

valley of death, which gathering and reflecting his fiery rays, is, at noon, all but insupportable. A steep pathway, up which we toiled with difficulty on foot, gradually brought us toward the summit of the mountain, and we looked down into the chasms sunk below, in the very depth of which are descried, here and there, the narrow dark mouths of the sepulchres, while others, undisturbed, are hidden in unseen recesses. Arriving at the crest of the passage, a light breeze from the Nile fanned our aching brows and somewhat relieved the oppressive sultriness, and the eye caught suddenly on the broad and noble river rolling afar like molten and glittering silver. A few steps more brought us to the very edge of the precipice, and the site of the "world's great mistress on the Egyptian plain" lay outstretched before us under the noontide heat.

It is, indeed, marked by nature for a great capital;—a grand valley many miles in width, divided by the Nile—defended on the west by the craggy range of mountains we stood upon, and on the east by the far distant hills on the Arabian side;—a mighty area, strewn for miles with the scattered remains of former magnificence, which, colossal as they prove to be on a nearer approach, from hence appear but specks upon the lifeless, desolate expanse.

I have not exhibited in the drawing the entire extent of the view, the Assaseef and its region of tombs lying too far to the west to be well included. The noble river, though the city through which it flowed has passed away, still maintains its fertilizing influence; its annual deposit, like its bed, has risen higher, and the ground probably once occupied by buildings in the centre of the view is all cultivable up to the edge of the sand at the foot of the Libyan mountains. The bold off-shoots of the arid sandstone mountain which occupy the fore and middle ground are pierced with innumerable sepulchres, running deep into the heart of the rock, the greater part of which face the south; the valleys between are equally the abodes of death, mummy-pits, long opened and rifled, every where honeycomb

the sandy soil; millions lay buried under the heaving mounds and the deep holes through which intricate and dangerous pathways run from ruin to ruin. On the verge of this region, among the burning sands, stand conspicuous on the left the ruins of the MEMNONIUM, one of the most extensive and elegant of the temples, but hence appearing an indistinct mass of columns and propylæa. To the left, following the edge of the cultivated soil, lies the path to the Assaseef, and some portions of the tombs of which appear. On the left are seen the temple and village of Gornou, not included in the view.

To the right, the path from the Memnonium conducts to the extensive mounds and ruins of MEDEENET HABOU, a world in itself; and behind is the gloomy Birket Habou, or lake of Habou, formerly dedicated to funeral ceremonies, and now seen surrounded by sandy mounds. In this direction, the city on this side, called the Libyan suburb, probably terminated. Conspicuous in the centre of the view, on the cultivated ground between the Memnonium and Medeenet Habou, stands, in lonely, isolated grandeur, the colossal statue of the Vocal Memnon and its more distant fellow; the earth has risen about their base and covered the fallen fragments of that avenue of sphynxes and buildings with which they stood connected. Beyond these, on the other side of the broad solitary river, appears, at a prominent point, the village and temple of LUXOR; and to the left of this, at the distance of more than a mile, are the groups of propylæa, walls, and columns of KARNAK, whose wonderful extent and colossal character are reduced by distance to a confused, undistinguishable mass. It was around and *far beyond* this central ruin, the heart of old Thebes, the perished city extended eastward towards the Arabian mountains.

Let us go back for a moment to the period of its highest magnificence. The vacant plain was then covered by the crowded streets of the capital, and from the spot where we stood, instead of the death-like silence which broods over it, we should have heard the hum of its immense population.

The streets, we find, were for the most part very narrow and impervious to the sun, but some were wider, and along these we may see rolling the light chariots of the wealthy, accompanied by their crowds of servants, and all the varied costumes of the different castes of society,—the pale intellectual priest, the bronzed veteran of the eastern campaigns, the tradesman, the husbandman, and the boatman. The houses in these main thoroughfares, we learn from Wilkinson, were stately and elegantly furnished, several stories high, and ornamented with portals, which, like those of the modern Arabs in Cairo, bore some religious inscriptions. From their interior courts, we should have admired, too, the groups of palm trees arising, covered with clouds of doves, and the flat roofs, each with its small turret, and machine for ventilation. From temple to temple, each with its massive entrance propylæa, probably the "hundred gates" alluded to by Homer, and its courts surrounded by defensive walls covered with historical sculptures, extended avenues of sphynxes, and along these we might picture to ourselves religious processions advancing in all their pomp, or the solemn celebration of the return of one of the warrior kings from some distant and successful enterprise.

The river, too, along which slowly moves at intervals a single bark, was then gay with a variety of vessels, from the splendid barge of the monarch to the humble ferry boats, which plied incessantly from the great avenues of Karnak and Luxor across to the western suburb, and disgorged the crowds who poured along the *'dromos*, or 'royal street,' which formerly connected the latter temple with the great colossi, which now stands, solitary, amidst the graves of the countless thousands it has outlived.

We must not forget the funeral ceremonies, already alluded to, so important a feature in the manners of the ancient Egyptians. Over the distant lake of Birket Habou, on the right of the view, might have been seen from time to time processions of boats, bearing the bodies of the dead, the mummy

deposited in a shrine, placed upon the sledge, upon which it was afterwards drawn, amidst the wailing of their kindred, to their tombs in the region of 'Amenti,' or the west, on which side of the Nile the cemeteries are usually placed. We may almost hear the clink of the workman's hammer as he fashioned the everlasting habitations of the dead, and we may fancy whole legions of painters and sculptors at work in ornamenting their dim recesses, with those vivid representations of every-day life, which subsisted here unchanged for ages.

With this view of the site of Thebes, map-like in detail and mournfully grand in its general impression, we proceed to examine the different monuments, or rather, fields of ruin, which are scattered about the plain. The steep pathway gradually descends from this commanding elevation, along the brink of sandstone precipices, beneath which is concealed the elegant little temple of Dayr el Medeeneh, well worthy of a separate visit, and at length brings us down to the walls and mounds of Medeenet Habou.

This immense group of buildings is so mixed up with a mass of later erections that it is difficult to realize its original effect. The principal edifice is the colossal temple and palace of Rameses III., but adjacent on the south, and on a different plane, is another, and smaller one, to which large courts have been added by the Ptolemaic kings. The pavilion of Rameses is very singular and unique in point of architecture, while its decorative sculptures are very curious. It appears (though from the point of view not fully) in the accompanying illustration, which also includes the later Ptolemaic courts and façade to the smaller temple above mentioned. Two lodges flanked the entrance to the palace; on either hand is a pyramidal building resembling a tower, on the external façades of which are sculptures representing the Egyptian conqueror in the act of smiting a vanquished foe, in presence of the god Amunre. The passage between these towers goes under the northern or inner part of the building, consisting of different apartments,

MEDEENET HÁBOU,

on the edge of the inundated land.

which, with others now ruined, formed the pavilion of the king. The rooms are surprisingly small, but exceedingly interesting, for on the walls are sculptures illustrative of the private life of an Egyptian monarch, who is seated among the favourites of his harem, all standing after the oriental fashion; some fan him, and others present him with flowers. These once royal apartments were occupied when we passed by a number of Fellahs from some distant village, with their camels, whose squalor and misery contrasted strangely with these vestiges of oriental voluptuousness. The exterior architecture of these pavilions is very curious, half-castellated in character, ornamented with pointed shields somewhat resembling the Saracen battlements of later times. The passage under the building continued in a line to the great temple, which is entered between two lofty propylæa adorned with sculptures of similar import to those on the pavilion. This gives access to the first great court, lined on either side with columns, half buried in rubbish, and terminated with another tower, between which we pass into a second and very splendid area. Some idea of its style may be formed from what remains of it; but the effect of the court has been much defaced by the destruction of the figures formerly attached to the square Osiride columns and other portions, as well as by the puny erections of Christian date, which stand in curious contrast to the decayed grandeur of the original building. A beautiful corridor of circular columns runs within the north side: on these the painting is much preserved, and assists us in forming some idea of the entire effect of the original design, which is justly regarded as very elegant, though the scale, after all, is not of that vastness which seems necessary to give an impressive effect to Egyptian architecture. The sculptures on the walls of the court (minutely described by Wilkinson) carry us back to the palmy days of their monarchy, and have proved a mine to the antiquary. There Rameses, borne in royal state, with his children, officers, and priests, officiates before the statues of

the gods of Thebes; every detail of their splendid religious ceremonies seems elaborately depicted; while on the other wall he is represented as battling and triumphing. Seated proudly in his car, he receives the unhappy captives, whose arms are painfully bound behind them; scribes enumerate the hands of the slain, and even more disgusting memorials of the barbarity of oriental warfare, which are heaped up before him; and the history of these exploits, supposed to record victories over their Asiatic enemies, appears in the accompanying hieroglyphic tablets.

Passing to the outside of the temple, the same scenes are exhibited in great variety and detail; and the sculptor, availing himself of the extensive flat surface afforded by the external walls, has given a sort of panorama of all the incidents of a campaign with some oriental enemy, covering the entire space, in curious adaptation, or rather defiance of perspective, with all the pell-mell and confusion of attack, defence, retreat—both by land and sea, in a style which, if not classically or anatomically correct, and often grotesque, is wonderfully truth-telling and spirited in the main; the storm of battle seems to roll along with all its savage incidents, in the invention of which, the sculptor has displayed an inexhaustible variety as well as historical minuteness. Every where the Egyptians triumph; the personal prowess of the monarch, who is always represented on a gigantic scale, is conspicuously exhibited—terrible and even cruel to his enemies, he is no less pious to his protecting gods; he transfixes the lions who attack his car with the same intrepidity and success with which he drives upon the opposing hosts,—in short, he is the very ideal of an old Homeric warrior and king.

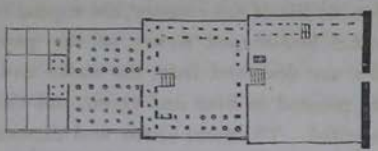
I have only instanced the principal objects of interest at Medeenet Habou, and those very briefly. Pass we now from this great and confused assemblage of buildings, along the edge of the cultivated land towards the ruins of the Memnonium. This track displays on all sides vestiges of former buildings, tombs on the sandy slopes and hills, and remains of statues and temples in the marsh below, connected with the colossal statues of

COLOSSAL STATUE OF RAMESES THE GREAT

at the Memnonium

Memnon, and other edifices, the site of which is obscure. The ruins of the Memnonium, or palace and temple of Rameses II., rise grandly upon the eye, far surpassing in effect those of Medeenet Habou. The immense propylon, covered with sculpture, which formed the entrance to the first court, the walls of which are destroyed; the second wall of this court, with the picturesque Osiride columns attached to it, with the fragments of the colossal statue at their foot, form so noble and characteristic a specimen of Egyptian architecture in ruin, that I could not resist the temptation of transferring it to my sketch-book. Perhaps the drawing may convey to the mind of the reader some measure of that wonder with which I regarded the prostrate fragments of that statue of Syenite granite, than which nothing in Thebes so well justifies the expression of Belzoni, that you appear to be wandering here among a city of giants. The portion seen in perspective in the drawing is merely the head, chest, and upper part of the figure, broken in the middle; it is 22 feet 4 inches across the shoulders, and 14 feet 4 inches from the neck to the elbow. "To say that this is the largest statue in Egypt will convey no idea of the gigantic size or enormous weight of a mass, which, from an approximate calculation, exceeded, when entire, nearly three times the solid contents of the great obelisk at Karnak, and weighed about 887 tons, 5½ hundred-weight." On the wall of the propylon in the back-ground is seen Rameses II. in his chariot driving upon a host of fugitive enemies during one of his Asiatic campaigns.

The Memnonium, though not the most colossal, is, perhaps, the most chaste and elegant specimen of Egyptian architecture, at its period of characteristic perfection, before its proportions were altered by the infusion of Grecian taste. It was, originally, a vast and sumptuous structure, the effect of which, even in its present fragmentary state, it is not difficult to imagine. Its lofty propylæa, or gateway towers, covered with historical sculptures, gave access to the first open court, in which stood the colossal statue, the fragments of which we have



just described. Through this there was a passage into the second court, having, on two sides, the rows of the Osiride columns, and the two remaining ones of circular columns, part of which corridor is seen in the annexed view. The entire effect of this second court must have been imposing in the extreme. Three flights of steps led up from its open area into the northern corridor of Osiride pillars; on each side of the centre one was a black granite statue of Rameses II. With his spirit awed by this display of magnificence, the spectator next advanced from this corridor into the *Grand Hall*, the azure

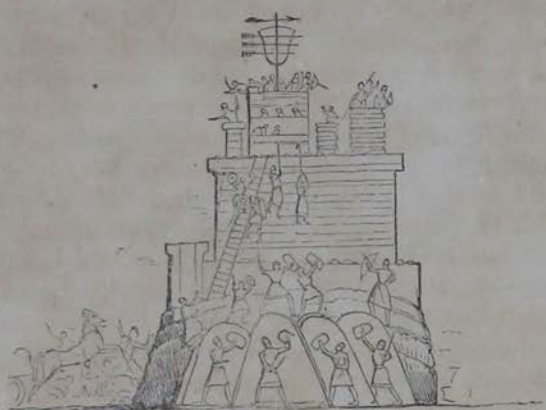
roof of which rose above his head, studded with golden stars, and was supported upon a central colonnade of twelve massive yet

elegant columns. It will be seen that the architecture is imitative of the vegetable life of the country, the capital being copied from the graceful bell-shaped flower of the papyrus. The adornments also are designed from the stalks and flowers of different plants, painted in blue and green, and they are often exquisitely beautiful. The more chaste and classical buildings of the Ramessean period, as in the present instance, have their ranges of columns and capitals uniform, while, as will be seen in the drawing of Edfou, those of the Ptolemaic period are studiously different, all of them too being combinations of vegetable forms, which, varied and graceful as they are, yet by that very variety detract, in a symmetrical architecture like that of the Egyptian temple, from simplicity of general effect.

Taking into account the grave, yet elegant simplicity of its architecture, the gorgeous decorations consisting of divine figures and symbols, imitative of the starry orbs of heaven, and the beautiful plants and flowers of the sacred Nile, together with the battle scenes carved upon the side walls commemorating the victories of the Egyptian monarchs, or processions to their gods, all blended by a rich and glowing reflection of the light admitted from the side apertures, we may fancy what must have been the impressiveness and beauty of this hall in its state of pristine perfection. It is certainly the most elegant, if not the most stupendous in Egypt.

Among the battle scenes on the south wall of the great hall, one is left—a curious scene, displaying the mode of attacking a fortress upon a rock. Under cover of the testudo, a shield composed of frame-work, and propped up, large enough to shelter several men, and curved so as to afford a footing to others, the assailants are engaged in mining, and planting scaling ladders against the walls. Of these testudos, four are commanded by sons of Rameses the Great. One of their allies, the extreme figure on the left, is endeavouring by use of a sharp spike placed in the fissures to clamber up the rock, which others, mounted on the testudos, are vigorously escalading. The

sculptor seems to have chosen a moment when the defence, still maintained on one side, by means of darts, stones, and spears, is slackening on the other, signals of surrender are making from above, and heralds are letting themselves down to treat of it, and implore the clemency of the victor. At the base of the tower, chariots and horsemen are rushing up to the scene of the assault. The whole effect is exceedingly life-like, natural, and striking, and probably represents some incident in one of the oriental campaigns of the monarch.



On the upper end of the hall, Rameses is represented receiving the emblems of life and power from Amun, the presiding deity of Thebes, and there is a long procession of his sons and daughters. From the great hall the visitor advanced into several smaller chambers, the first of which being apparently the library, over which Hecatæus praises the inscription which calls the books of Thoth the "medicine of the mind." It is adorned with astronomical subjects, and the inmost, to which access was given by a door of two folds revolving on bronze pins, were also covered with sculptures representing the monarch making offerings to the gods.

Nigh to the exterior of the Memnonium are several masses

THE TWO COLOSSI

of the crude or sun-dried bricks, which are so common at Thebes, of which the external enclosures of the precincts of the temples were formed, as well as the greater part of the private buildings of the city. These are peculiarly interesting, as being the same alluded to in the Bible, at the making of which the captive Israelites toiled in Lower Egypt, and, as some have imagined, even at Thebes, from certain representations of the process of making them, which are painted in the tombs. They are made of clay combined with chopped straw, as mentioned in the Scripture account. It is supposed by Wilkinson that this making of bricks was a royal monopoly, from the oval names of the different kings which are stamped upon them. Friable as they are, and easily broken with a hammer, they perfectly retain, after a lapse of three thousand years, their original form and stamp. Several of them are preserved in the British Museum. They are about 16 inches long, 7 wide, and 5 thick.

From the Memnonium I proceeded towards the Vocal Memnon, but the progress of the inundation had so saturated the surrounding soil that I was unable to reach its base. This statue, and its fellow, standing austere and solemn in the midst of the lone expanse, appear more weather-beaten and scarred by external injury and by the hand of time than any other monuments in this vast field of ruin. Their lineaments are half effaced, and their gigantic limbs fractured and blackened. It has been often remarked that Egyptian ruins are in general far from impressing us with a sense of their immense antiquity, owing to the absence of those grey hues and weather stains, and that overgrowth of shrouding vegetation, which give so venerable an air to those of Europe, whose age is comparatively but of yesterday. In this dry and cloudless clime, the temples seem, as it has been well expressed, "to whiten and burnish under the sun of the desert;" and so perfect is often the stone-work, so sharp the chiselling, and brilliant the colours of edifices raised three thousand years ago, that one might suppose that they were but yesterday hurled from perfection into ruin.

Not so, however, with this pair—survivors of the downfal which has overtaken other colossi of materials more solid. Hoary, and blackened, and time-worn, they may well seem to have already outlived the fall of empires and creeds, and yet to be destined in their immovable solidity to testify of the grandeur of ancient Thebes to nations yet unborn.

When we consider the astonishing magnitude of these statues, and of that still more extraordinary one of the Memnonium which we have just described, as well as of the obelisks at Karnak, we are puzzled how to conceive of their mode of transport or erection. The stone from which the two sitting statues are cut is not found, as Wilkinson informs us, within several days' journey of the place, and the Syenite granite of the Memnonium was brought from the cataracts to Thebes, a distance of 138 miles. The block being separated from the contiguous mass by the action of wedges, and hewn into shape, scaffoldings were raised about it, and it was polished and completed by the workmen. The mode of transport was probably by water, but we are at a loss to suggest the means of lowering and raising at will such stupendous masses. A most interesting representation of the manner of dragging along a colossus was discovered by Irby and Mangles, in a tomb, and is figured and described in Wilkinson's work. A body of nearly two hundred men, probably captives, such alone being employed in similar services, are arranged in four columns, and are toiling under the eye of the taskmaster, at the exhausting task of dragging the statue by ropes, inch by inch, towards the place of its destination. This statue was not above half the size of the colossi, consequently we must suppose double the number of men to have been here employed. It is placed in a sledge, and the inclined plane, whether on the ground or of boarding, is being greased or wetted to facilitate the descent. A man stands on the knee of the colossus, beating time, or uttering, like the Nile boatmen, a shout, by which the captives, as they repeated it, might count each separate pulsation of their long-continued agony. It is very sad

to think how many victims of the fate of war, torn from distant climes and deprived of every solace, must have perished, the weak with the strong, in these exhausting labours. We may hear the panting cry, and mark the failing strength, as, urged along by the blow of the taskmaster, the sinking captive dropped upon the sand, a vision of his distant country rushing through his expiring brain. We may imagine, too, the sense of exultation with which the Thebans would witness the rearing of these statues of their great warrior kings, only to be equalled by the savage satisfaction with which a foreign invader would behold them retributively hurled prostrate on the sand, from which they would never again be raised.

A peculiar, almost poetical interest hovers about the statue invested by ancient tradition with the name of the "Vocal Memnon," which, according to old accounts, when the sun rose above the Arabian mountains and touched its lips with light, was supposed to utter responsive sounds; even modern visitors having repaired there before sun-rise with vague expectation, that, by the operation of some peculiar cause, not yet understood, the marvel might be realized for them, but in vain. Some have considered the sounds as produced by accident, and instances of a somewhat similar nature have certainly been met with, of tones issuing forth from among hollow rocks; but there is far more reason to believe, that it was a contrivance of the priesthood to extend their influence over a superstitious people. The mystery, to all appearance, has been unravelled by Sir G. Wilkinson: he had remarked, that one of the visitors had compared the sound to that of brass; and ascended to the lap of the statue, first posting some Arabs at its base, who exclaimed, as he struck the stone with a hammer, "You are striking brass." This explanation, however, has not satisfied every one.

Inscriptions expressive of the admiration or spleen of travellers, are no where more numerous than on this statue. Great numbers of Grecks and Romans visited it in the reign of Hadrian and the Antonines, and never failed to repair

thither at sun-rise. When Hadrian visited Thebes the second time, his empress was disappointed at not hearing the musical sounds, but on her hinting threats of the emperor's displeasure, her curiosity was gratified on the following morning.

These statues were not, as would be the first impression of the ordinary visitor, isolated monuments of Theban magnificence, but stood in advance of an extensive temple, of which few vestiges now remain, at "Kom el Hattan, or the mound of sandstone," in the rear; and to the south of them. With this they were connected by a long Dromos, or avenue, which, with other statues, Wilkinson supposes to have extended across the western portion of the city, and to have communicated with Luxor by a ferry across the Nile, and thus to have been a main thoroughfare of ancient Thebes. What a vision of past magnificence, of warlike or religious pageants passing to and fro, does this bring up before us! How many successive generations must have trodden the pavement of this royal street! At that period, the level of the inundated plain, as well as of the bed of the river, of course was much lower than at present; so that the inundation did not extend so far back towards the western mountain, nor, as now, cover the bases of the statues which rest on the sand, with a deposit several feet deep.

It will be observed in the drawing that the upper half of the Vocal Memnon (the nearer statue) has been built up again in huge layers of masonry. Strabo was told that its previous destruction was caused by the shock of an earthquake; but there can be little doubt, that it was the work of Cambyses when he ravaged the adjacent Memnonium. The dimensions of the statues are about the same as those of the wonderful one at the Memnonium already figured, but they must yield to that in the solidity of the material, these being single blocks of sandstone instead of Syenite granite. To this more friable material the comparative antiquity of their appearance is much owing. On each side of the leg is a female statue, and on the side a repre-

sentation of the god Nilus, bending the stalks of two water-plants, indicative of the upper and lower country, above a tablet containing the two cartouches of Amunothph III.,* and supposed to indicate his sovereignty over the upper and lower country. There is also a line of hieroglyphics down the back of the statue.

Such are the *principal* objects (for they are not all) on the western bank of the Nile, of which an idea can be conveyed to the reader by the aid of the pencil. As I have said before, these isolated monuments are far from giving an adequate impression of Thebes. They stand on the edge of a vast funereal field, extending from the cultivated alluvium to the sandstone mountain which bounds the plain intersected by obscure and dangerous paths among yawning mummy-pits and graves. Ranges of tombs hewn in the mountain above, some greater in extent even than those of the kings, penetrate far into the bowels of the mountain; chamber after chamber, and passage after passage, whose walls, as the light is applied to them, kindle into vivid epitome of the life of the old Egyptian world, —its religious solemnities, its familiar usages, its progress from the cradle to the grave, its scenes of daily domestic life, of high festivity and solemn funeral, with the passage of the dead into the realms of futurity, the judgment, and the mysterious transmigration of the soul. Who could suspect that all this is revealed to us in these wonderful sepulchres, which externally appear but holes in the sandy rock? and how strange and sad is it to come forth to the light of day after this long and absorbing converse in these dusky recesses with the past life of this great people, and behold the wrecks of their proud city wide spread over the empty desolate plain!

The pits also in which are deposited the mummied remains of the ancient inhabitants are among the most singular spectacles. Some of the bodies are merely dried, but those of the more wealthy classes, enveloped in a shroud of fine linen, with aro-

* Wilkinson.

matic gums, are heaped together in horrid grotesque confusion, like the skeletons and heaps of bones in a neglected charnel-house. The resurrection-men of Gornou, who house themselves in the tombs cut in the rock, are regularly employed in rifling these pits in quest of articles to be sold to travellers; sometimes an entire mummy in its case is carried off to be sold intact, others are rent to pieces in quest of the ornaments which may have been buried with their possessors; the painted case or prepared linen which may have enveloped the body is ruthlessly torn off, and the shrivelled ghastly carcasses are scattered about in all directions in the sand, generally dismembered. Everything seems given up to ruthless havoc, and yet the stock of plunder is unexhausted, for in these cemeteries a whole nation is entombed.

"Mummification," says Gliddon in his interesting essay, from which these particulars are compressed, "preceded, in all probability, the building of the pyramids and tombs, because vestiges of mummies have been found in the oldest of these, and, in fact, the first mummies were buried in the sand before the Egyptians possessed the necessary tools for excavating sepulchres in the rock. In the time of Joseph the art was not new. Manetho and Clemens Alexandrinus mention circumstances which lead us to infer the existence of manuscript treatises on the art between 3000 and 5000 years ago, which is confirmed by passages in the "Book of the Dead" at Turin, translated by Dr. Lepsius. The practice continued long after the Christian era, and some of the fathers made it the object of their anathemas. It did not cease entirely till the seventh century after Christ, or the Muslim invasion. Thus we may suppose that mummification has subsisted for a period, in round numbers, of some 4000 years. The number of mummies are between four and five hundred millions. The earliest mummy cases, like that, for instance, of king Mencheres in the British Museum, were extremely simple, and the bodies were prepared with natron, or dried in ovens, and wrapped in woollen cloth, linen being

then, probably, unknown. In the mummies of the 12th dynasty, this material is already in use. The bodies are partially gilded, and great luxury introduced in the decorations; and thus the relative antiquity of mummies can be deduced from the successive *fashions* of embalmment. Of these the epoch of *bitumen* forms a grand era, at the 15th dynasty; for then this substance, which was unknown to the Egyptians prior to the conquests of Assyria by the early Pharaohs of the 15th dynasty, began to be used. Mr. Birch has discovered data which indicate very distinctly the epoch when bitumen began to be used in mummification. Among the articles of tribute exacted by Thothmes III., in the 16th century before Christ, from the conquered princes of Nineveh, Shinar, Naharine, Babel, and the Mesopotamian provinces, which are recorded on the tablet of Karnak, now in the Louvre, it is said that the chief of the country brought, among other tributes to the Pharaoh, 2050 ingots of bitumen. Now as bitumen is an Asiatic production, abundant near the Euphrates, it was inaccessible to the Egyptians until Assyria was conquered by the Pharaohs of the 18th dynasty."

"The dried corpse of the humble quarryman was merely saturated with natron, baked in an oven, swathed sometimes in woollen rags, and covered with palm branches and papyrus matting; while on the body of the wealthy priest were lavished the most expensive spices and perfumes; after which it was wrapped in many hundred yards of the finest tissue, and placed in three coffins, all sculptured, painted, gilded, and enamelled, with a superfluity of extravagance. The great majority, however, belonged to the middle class."

"Every provincial temple was provided with an establishment for the purpose of mummification. The bodies were delivered to the priests to be embalmed, and after seventy days restored to their friends to be carried to the place of deposit. The paintings in the tombs represent funeral processions, in which we see the mummy transported in cars, or borne on

sledges drawn by oxen, and attended by mourning friends. The mummies of Jacob and Joseph were thus carried from Egypt into the land of Canaan."

Few things are more impressive than to wander among this Necropolis of Thebes, where the mighty and the rich lie blended with inferior dust; bewildered among this chaos of tombs, and mummy pits, and yawning chasms, among which you must cautiously pick your way, when the sole sound is the savage yelling of the dogs of Gornou echoing wildly among the cliffs; when the sun, sinking behind the western mountain, touches with its red beams the summit of the Memnonium, and the long shadows from the hoary colossi stretch across the desolate plain; and you hasten away from the inhospitable shore to regain the shelter and comfort of your little boat—your floating home upon the Nile.

Having explored, though very imperfectly, the wonders of the western suburb, when the sun had hardly risen we hoisted our lateen sails and crossed over from the Libyan to the Arabian side of the Nile. As we neared the temple of Luxor the golden light slanted through its massive columns, which were finely reflected in the still waters of the river. The Fellahs from the village had come down to fill their water-skins, which were arranged on the backs of camels, and the buffaloes had already taken to the cooling stream, in which they immersed themselves till only the tips of their noses and horns were visible.

Our approach was not unobserved, and hardly had the little vessel landed at the old Roman pier in the distance of our view, before we were boarded by the ugliest as well as most importunate Ghawazee or dancing-girls we had yet met with, together with guides and donkey-boys, all equally eager to devote their several talents to our immediate gratification. It was with some difficulty we got rid of these troublesome visitors, and advanced towards the village. A chorus composed of importunate cries for beckshish and a fierce yelling of dogs, saluted us

LUXOR FROM THE WATER.

OBELISK AND PROPYLON.

Luxor.

on our way to the temple, an ignoble welcome to this scene of majestic ruin. From its beautiful situation on a rising ground above the Nile, the temple of Luxor must have had a singularly fine effect in its pristine perfection, but it is now perhaps the least interesting of all the buildings of Thebes, being so disguised by the mud hovels and paltry buildings of the modern village, clustered around the base of the columns or piled upon the tops of the colonnades, that few portions assume any grandeur of effect. The view I have selected will illustrate these remarks, and give an idea of the great extent of the edifice, the details of which I shall not attempt to describe. One noble group of objects, however, must not be dismissed without especial notice —the celebrated obelisk and propylæa, or gateway towers, through which lay the approach to the courts of the temple within, and of which the camera drawing will I hope convey an accurate impression. Of the two obelisks of red granite which formerly stood here, one now embellishes the Place de la Concorde at Paris; the other, though deeply buried in sand, is one of the finest monuments of Thebes; the depth of the hieroglyphics, about 2 inches, is unusual, and gives to them an extraordinary relief and sharpness. Two sitting statues of Rameses II., also half covered with sand, appear behind the obelisks and add much to the grandeur of the entrance; the dark grey hue of the granite contrasts finely with the sand, and the puny squalid figures passing and repassing, give a vastness and solemnity to these colossal wrecks. Behind towers a noble propylon, though its effect is much impaired by the ruin of the bold cornice which gave it so grand and imposing a termination; its immense level façade is crowded with the incidents of a tumultuous battle scene, the stone is alive with the shock of warring squadrons; on one compartment the triumphant king is driving his chariot upon hosts of flying enemies; on the other, he is represented after victory, seated on his throne, the vanquished monarch bound to his chariot-wheels awaits the pleasure of his conqueror; other suppliants bend before

him, and below appears a sad array of fated captives. Terror and inexorable sternness are the qualities with which the sculptor has evidently laboured to invest his hero. This is the most elaborate among the number of similar scenes at Thebes, but it is so high above the ground that its details are not to be made out with ease, and the effect of the sculpture is much impaired by the lines of the masonry. Still it is indeed magnificent.

Leaving Luxor, I now mounted on a donkey, and struck across the plain, which was formerly covered with the buildings of the city, towards Karnak, the last and crowning marvel of all Thebes. An avenue about a mile in length formerly conducted from Luxor, bordered by a double row of sphynxes, of which few traces now remain. There must have been something very awful and impressive in this long avenue of these sacred and mysterious figures, uniting the head of a human being to the body of a lion, emblematic of the union of wisdom and power—like the similar ranges of upright stones which led to the rude Druidical temples of Avebury on the Wiltshire downs, it must have prepared the mind of the worshipper for the subduing grandeur of the more sacred enclosures to which it led. None of these singular statues now remain perfect, but here and there a fragment appears. Following this long and majestic approach, we reach at length a point at which the first view of Karnak burst upon us. A noble pylon, or gateway, occupies the centre of the field of ruin; behind it is seen the small temple built by Rameses IV.; to the right, among palm trees, appear the remains of a majestic propylon, which formed the entrance to a succession of ruined courts by which the great temple was approached on this side, of which, quite in the background, a small portion is visible, together with its obelisk. The pylon, a specimen of the later or Ptolemaic style, is certainly one of the very finest specimens of Egyptian architecture remaining. Nothing can exceed the majestic simplicity of its colossal proportions—the beautiful relief of the cornice. It

APPROACH TO KARNAK.

from Luxor

stands erect and lonely among the wrecks around with a peculiarly noble effect, beyond perhaps that of any single monument in Thebes; and in passing under it our ideas are raised to a height of wonder, and prepared for the colossal scale and vast extent of the field of ruins to which it gives access. Its sculptures, however, are not to be compared with those of an earlier date. The majestic cornice is ornamented with a fine specimen of the "Winged Globe," so universal in Egypt, a beautiful emblem, to adopt Gliddon's description, of Providence overshadowing the land of the Nile. "The central disk of the sun, allegorical of physical and celestial light, and surmounted by the ram's horn, symbolical of Amun Knum—divine intelligence, is flanked by the wings of Maut—the beneficent mother, or more probably of the Scarabæus, or sacred beetle, symbol of Kheper—the *Creator*, *sun*. From the central solar disk depend two crowned royal asps, symbolical of sovereignty, —the red crown of terrestrial, and the white of celestial dominion, and the cruces ansatæ, or 'taus,' hanging by their necks, typifying eternity. In the literal Hebrew text, Isaiah apostrophizes Egypt, (ch. xviii. 1,) 'Ho! land of the *winged* (Globe).'"

The small temple in the rear of this gate will not long detain us from the more imposing ruins of the Great Temple. To this immense pile, the work of successive ages, there are, of course, different entrances; but the principal one, and that by which the extent and symmetry of the plan is best understood, is by the colossal propylon facing the river: and, looking across towards the temple at Gornou, a line of sphynxes also led up a rising ground to the vast propylon, the largest in Egypt, which, like two mighty towers of rude masonry, formed a grand and impressive approach. From its summit, or the top of the walls which connect it with the great court, a view is obtained, which, in its full extent, must baffle all description,—there is nothing like it even in Thebes,—not one alone, but a perfect wilderness of temples, courts, propylæa, gateways, and obelisks, extends around. Some, buried under the ruin of ages, yawn from beneath like

caverns; others stand erect in towering grandeur, part perfect, and elsewhere hurled as if by thunderbolts into chaotic confusion. Beyond the main mass of the great temple, the heart of ancient Thebes, others indistinctly appear, with the numerous propylæa which gave access to them, and the avenues by which they were united to the principal edifice, receding on all hands with an effect of bewildering grandeur. Add to this the outstretched lonely plain beyond, with its groves of palm intersected by the river, and the distant mountains and temples and countless tombs of the Libyan suburb on the opposite bank; and some faint idea may, perhaps, be formed of this extraordinary wilderness of ruin, and of the feeling of astonishment it awakens in the mind of the spectator.

To attempt any detailed and minute description of this irregular assemblage of sacred edifices would be useless in a work of this nature, which rather seeks to convey the impression occasioned by a few of the more remarkable objects than to enter into details; moreover, without a plan the most elaborate description of this nature would be absolutely unintelligible. Even with the admirable survey of Wilkinson, with which every one should be provided, lying before me as I write, the plan appears so confused, that memory cannot retain more than a few of its more salient points. This spot appears to have been the most sacred in Thebes. To the original temple, early as Osirtesen II., which was of small dimensions, additions were continually made, till it assumed a vastness and splendour unequalled by any other monument in the city. Other temples were erected in the vicinity of this most sacred site, and successively united, by avenues of sphynxes and majestic propylæa and courts, with the principal edifice, till the whole formed a maze of religious edifices through which the ancient Egyptian must have wandered with awe, and which, in their original perfection, with the gorgeous ceremonial of the worship performed in them, must have produced a soul-subduing effect upon this superstitious people.

KARNAK.

1st Court.

But to return to the great propylon. The first view presented shows the great court to which it gives access; in the fore-ground is the wall forming its boundary; the corresponding one opposite is seen attached to the base of the propylon, and, running up to a small temple, let in, as it were, to the court, the external wall of which just beyond contains a sculptured representation of Sheshonk, the Shishak of the Book of Kings, leading his prisoners, among which it is supposed are the captive Jews from Jerusalem, which was taken by this monarch. In the open distant ground beyond this side of the court, appear in perspective, on the right hand, the propylæa of another small temple of the Ptolemaic period, with the noble gateway beyond, by which we approached; and farther to the left, a succession of ruined propylæa, through which was another approach to the great temple from a smaller one beyond. Another small temple standing in this court is seen buried at the right-hand corner of the view under the accumulated ruin of ages. A noble row of columns, of which only one is standing, formed a solemn avenue of approach across the court from the external propylon to the inner one, one side of which is shattered and falling, and its vast blocks are hurled one upon another in wild confusion, as though by some convulsion. Through this second propylon we pass under a ruined vestibule and lofty gate which formed the front of the Great Hall; and here seating ourselves among the fallen blocks, the columns of this majestic ruin burst upon us in long perspective, with the obelisk and gateways extending toward the distant sanctuary, and other still more remote buildings. So bewildering are all these details that I can scarcely hope to give but a very general idea of them.

We had spent so much time in the examination of Luxor, and of the other portions of Karnak, that the evening was advanced when we arrived at the Great Hall. The shadows were creeping solemnly through the intricate recesses of its forest of columns, but the red light rested for a while upon their beautiful flower-shaped capitals, the paintings upon which, scarred and

worn as they are by the accidents of 3000 years, still display, under a strong light, much of their original vividness. It is a perfect wilderness of ruin, almost outrunning the wildest imagination or the most fantastic dream. We paced slowly down the central avenue. The bases of the columns are buried among the fallen fragments of the roof and a mass of superincumbent earth; from his hiding-place amidst which the jackal began to steal forth, and wake the echoes of the ruins with his blood-curdling shriek; whilst the shadowy bat flitted, spirit-like, from dusky pillar to pillar. From the centre of the hall, whichever way we looked through the deepening gloom, there seemed no end to the labyrinthine ruins. Obelisks and columns, some erect in their pristine beauty, others fallen across, and hurled together in hideous confusion, forming wild arcades of ruin; enormous masses of prostrate walls and propylæa, seemed to have required either to construct or to destroy them the power of a fabled race of giants. Pillars, obelisks, and walls of this immense hall, were covered with the forms of monarchs who reigned, and of the gods who were once worshipped within it. Involuntarily the mind goes back, in gazing on them, to the period of its original splendour, when Rameses in triumph returned from his oriental conquests,—pictures the pile in all its completeness, the hall of a hundred and thirty columns with its superb roof, glittering in all the vivid beauty of its paintings, thronged with monarchs, and priests, and worshippers, and devoted to splendid and gorgeous ceremonies.

The impression produced by Egyptian architecture, and particularly by this stupendous hall, as well as by the mute forms which gaze upon us from the walls, is one of profound solemnity rather than the admiration of beauty. There is none of the divine intellectual harmony of Grecian art. We are awed by the vastness and simplicity of the temples, and by the abstruse symbols of the Egyptian religion with which they are covered. It has been remarked that this feeling grows upon the traveller as he remains in Egypt. Everything that he falls in with

tends to deepen it, to convince him that he is gazing upon the works of a great and thoughtful people, whose "wisdom" was proverbial in the most ancient times. Like the old pilgrims of Greece, who came to Egypt to study its science and religion, and who departed full of admiration and wonder; the traveller carries away from the sight of its ruins something of the same awe-struck and reverential spirit, and what was at first regarded as a mere spectacle gradually becomes with him a serious study.

In regard to the religion of ancient Egypt—the learned priests had, about the Christian era, arrived at the conception of the unity of God, but believing this idea to be too abstruse for the mass, they symbolized the different attributes of Divinity in the form of different gods, which, though to themselves merely emblems, were the objects of the superstitious veneration of the common people. Their more profound doctrine was only disclosed to those initiated into the mysteries. Many, however, are inclined to doubt whether the early religion of the Egyptians was originally anything more than a gross Polytheism, or Manichæism; that it was not till a late period that they acquired the sublime idea of the Divine unity, and that they then reduced to mere symbols what before were so many independent objects of worship. Such as it was, religion was interwoven with everything in Egypt. The first government of Thebes was priestly, and when it became a monarchy, the king was always invested with a sacerdotal character. We see him every where upon the temples represented as offering sacrifices to the gods, and receiving from them the investiture with "life and power." A spirit of devotion was kept alive in the people by a constant round of religious ceremonies, a reference of every thing to the gods. A severe morality was inculcated, after death the actions of the departed were weighed before Osiris, and the souls of the wicked condemned to inhabit the bodies of obscene and unclean animals, till after their allotted period of purification was fulfilled. Every contrivance of the priests

tended to produce a spirit of profound reverence, which, however, degenerated into a narrow and slavish superstition.

Amun, the presiding deity of Thebes, may, as Wilkinson observes, be considered under two distinct characters,—as Amunre, king of the gods, answerable to the Grecian Jupiter, or as Amunre Generator. Amun with Maut and Khonso formed the great triad of divinities worshipped at Thebes. The forms and emblems of these deities, in different combinations, look down upon us from every part of the temple. Besides the divinities who had here their worship and their oracles, the city of Thebes possessed her own presiding genius or goddess, whose emblems were discovered by Sir Gardner Wilkinson in his examination of the great temple.

Next morning, after an early breakfast, I was again among the ruins of the Great Hall, which I had but imperfectly surveyed the previous evening. I remained there the whole day, shifting from the shade of one column to another during the noontide heat. Salem sent me some provisions by one of the sailors. I give its dimensions from Wilkinson, with a description of the rest of the temple. "It measures 170 feet by 329, supported by a central avenue of twelve massive columns, 66 feet high (without the pedestal and abacus) and 12 in diameter, besides a hundred and twenty-two of smaller, or rather less gigantic dimensions, 41 feet 9 inches in height, and 27 feet 6 inches in circumference, distributed in seven lines on either side of the former. The twelve central columns were originally fourteen, but the two northernmost have been enclosed within the front towers or propylæa, apparently in the time of Osirei himself, the founder of the hall. The two at the other end were also partly built into the projecting wall of the doorway, as appears from their rough sides, which were left uneven for that purpose. Attached to this are two other towers, closing the inner extremity of the hall, beyond which are two obelisks, one still standing on its original site, the other having been thrown down and broken by human violence. Similar but smaller propylæa succeed to this court, of which they

KARNAK.

Retrospective view of the Grand Hall.

form the inner side." This is the spot which I have selected for a retrospective view of the Great Hall, the obelisk still standing, but the propylæa in the fore-ground a mass of utter ruin. Still following the intricate plan of the great temple through the ruined propylæa in the fore-ground, we reach another court with two obelisks of larger dimensions, the one now standing being 92 feet high and 8 square, surrounded by a peristyle, if I may be allowed the expression, of Osiride figures. Passing between two dilapidated propylæa, you enter another smaller area, ornamented in a similar manner, and succeeded by a vestibule, in front of the granite gateways that form the façade of the court before the sanctuary. This last is also of red granite, divided into two apartments, and surrounded by numerous chambers of small dimensions, varying from 29 feet by 16, to 16 feet by 8. The walls of this small sanctuary, standing on the site of a more ancient one, are highly polished, sculptured, and painted, and the ceiling of stars, on a blue ground, the whole exquisitely finished. The entire height of the hall, i. e. the central portion, is not less than 80 feet, the propylæa still higher.

The imagination is no doubt bewildered in following these numerous details, and yet much is left undescribed and even unnoticed, and the eye, even of the visitor, more than satisfied with seeing, will return to the prominent objects, those alone of which he can expect to retain a vivid recollection. The Great Hall will attract his attention above everything else. Of its immensity the different views introduced will, I hope, convey some impression, though confessedly a very inadequate one. Besides the grandeur of its proportions, he will be struck with the elaborate manner in which every part was sculptured and painted, with representations of the worship of the chief deity of Thebes, which, emblematic as they might be to the learned, to the common people must have had a highly debasing and sensualizing tendency. Perhaps the finest historical sculptures at Thebes are to be found on the eastern external wall of

the Great Hall. Here the genius of Egyptian sculpture appears to have reached its height, and to approach the high character of Grecian art, and we admire no less the fertility of invention, masterly execution, and expression which animates the several groups, than we follow out with interest all the incidents of the different wars and triumphs of the Egyptian monarchs, so vividly represented, the scene of which Wilkinson supposes to have been in Asia, as the names of 'Canana' and 'Lemanon' are deciphered among the list of places. Tablets recording similar, if not the same expeditions, I remember to have seen in Syria, one by the road-side at Nahr el Kelb, near Beirout. Rameses II., (supposed by Wilkinson to be the same as Sesostris,) and his father Osirei, are the great heroes of these exploits: famous in war and splendid in peace, they spent their early years in extending the conquests of Egypt, and then returned to Thebes to commemorate them upon the walls of their temples and palaces, equally remarkable for the grand and stern simplicity and massiveness of their architecture, which is the best type of the Egyptian style, and for the vigorous and original character of the decorative bas-reliefs.

We were fortunate enough to reach Karnak when the moon was near the full. Already bewildering by day from its vast extent, by night it seemed almost illimitable. Then is the time to wander through its huge propylæa in solemn shadow; its long lines of wall carved with the achievements of ancient kings, shadowy spectres of remote history; its lofty obelisks piercing the pure and intense depths of the nocturnal sky and confounding their hieroglyphics with the stars; its vast avenues of columns, through which the moonlight forces an intricate pathway; some in deep shade with their edges only illuminated, others basking in the whitening beams, with their hieroglyphics and paintings almost as vivid as by day. Enormous heaps of ruin, distant gateway towers marking the avenues of approach, expand mysteriously beyond the reach of vision; whilst the plain, with its green crops and palm groves, the Nile, like a bar

of silver in its midst, the Libyan suburb, its colossi, and temples, the western mountain perforated with its countless tombs, faintly relieving from the starlit sky, complete the awful magnificence of the picture.

After wandering about the ruins, our rides back across the moonlit plain to Luxor were delightful. As we approached the lights twinkled amidst its mud huts, and we caught, as we passed, the sounds of boisterous merriment. During our visits to Karnak the Reis and sailors, after the day's fast, had spent their time on shore between the dancing-girls and the raki bottle; to-night they preferred to devote their reviving energies to a little stealing. For the sake of privacy we had laid the boat alongside an enclosed garden which came down to the river. Above its low wall arose some date trees covered with the richest clusters, which had attracted their cupidity from the moment of our arrival. The proprietor, however, kept so close a watch that to abstract them by daylight was wholly impossible. I was sitting in the little cabin, and reducing to order the sights of the day, when I heard a loud outcry, and rushing on deck, found the proprietor of the fruit, who furiously pointed to the top of the mast, which one of the boatmen had ascended, and down which he was gliding, encumbered with his luscious spoil. The culprit was taken in the manner, and summary justice administered on the spot, and, at my desire, by Salem, although, notwithstanding his ardent piety, I could not somehow help suspecting him also of being indirectly concerned in the theft.

CHAPTER VI.

THEBES TO ESNEH AND EDFOU.—ASSOUAN.—THE CATARACTS.—PHILÆ.—ABUSIMBAL.

WITH the intention of passing some time on our return, advantage was taken of the Etesian wind to continue our southern progress. The temples gradually dwindled, the lofty western mountain lowered, and Thebes faded upon the rearward horizon. Landing at Hermonthis, a visit was paid to its small but elegant Ptolemaic temple, now fast falling into ruin. Esneh, which we reached next day, detained us for some hours. The Reis and sailors went into the town to obtain provisions, and we had great difficulty in getting them together. There were, in fact, potent attractions on shore, Esneh being the head quarters of the banished dancing-girls, who flaunt about the bazaars with loose, immodest dresses, and dusky cheeks thickly covered with paint. The portico of the temple struck us as the most magnificent specimen of the Ptolemaic style in Egypt. The earth has almost covered up the exterior, although Mehemet Ali has cleared out the inside, into which you, accordingly, have to descend. The columns are unusually tall and slender, and the exquisite variety and graceful designs of the capitals, all formed upon the type of different plants and flowers of the country, is no where surpassed, if equalled. Esneh is a town of some little consequence, but, like Nile towns in general, presents nothing to interest the traveller beyond this splendid portico, and as soon as we could drive on board our reluctant sailors, we spread our sails and hastened up

EDFOU.

entrance court.

the river. The breeze being favourable, we did not land to visit the very curious grottos of El Kab or Eilythias, of which Miss Martineau, and so many other travellers, have given vivid descriptions. The temple of Edfou, however, a very striking object from the river, tempted us awhile on shore. It stands on rising ground not far from the Nile, and as the external wall with which it is surrounded is entire, gives us a complete idea of the vast size and massive grandeur of an Egyptian temple in its state of completeness, serving no less as a fortress and a palace for the sacerdotal caste, than as a place for the solemn rites of religion. We advanced through a wretched village of mud hovels swarming with ragged Fellahs, and beset by naked children, who raised a shrill demand of "beckshish howaga," accompanied by the barking of a host of dogs, who, roused by our arrival from dozing in the sun upon heaps of festering filth, joined the discordant chorus. Thus escorted we reached the magnificent propylon, covered with gigantic forms of mythological and regal personages, who seemed to look down impassive and contemptuous upon the din and dust raised by the degenerate tenants of their beloved and once glorious land. Spite of the sticks of dragoman and boatmen, some of the more active contrived to glide in with us, unperceived, to the interior, while others, climbing like monkeys to the top of the corridors, pursued us with their impish antics and importunate clamour, till, their position being stormed, they were driven down with kicks and blows into the area below, raising in their escape whole clouds of suffocating dust. Meanwhile, passing between the solemn gateway towers, which are entirely perfect, we entered the first court, which is also entire, with its surrounding corridor supported by ranges of light Ptolemaic pillars, the flat roof of which served equally as a promenade or vantage-ground of defence. At the extremity of this court, and forming the vestibule of the temple itself, is a magnificent corridor, now almost filled with accumulated earth, but with the beautiful capitals still entire, and bright

with azure and green as when first from the painter's hand. The annexed engraving is a view from this point, looking back to the entrance-towers, and a tolerably complete idea may be formed from it, of the imposing appearance of the access to an Egyptian temple in its complete state. The massive capitals of the corridor will show the graceful variety already noticed in the description of Esneh, some of which are, to our thinking, more beautiful than the capitals of the Greek orders. The remainder of the interior is almost filled up with rubbish, and, imperfectly seen, as it needs must be, hardly repays the trouble of groping through heaps of dust and filth. We therefore ascended the roof of the corridors, and walked round great part of the walls, which are strong and lofty as those of a castle. Hence we could peep down upon the miserable mud-built hovels of the modern town, into its foul, narrow, blind passages, choked up with half-naked children and wolfish-looking dogs; while beyond, the green variegated crops of the Nile valley, dotted with graceful groups of palms, and the broad river rolling through the midst, was almost painfully in contrast with the abject wretchedness and degradation of its human tenants. Edfou seen, we at once rejoined our boat, and sailing on by the light of a glorious evening, reached the remarkable pass of Hagar Silsilis, or "the Rock of the Chain." This is the only spot all the way from the sea, where the river is bordered on both sides by a chain of lofty precipices coming down abruptly to the river, and contracting its current into a comparatively narrow space. Here we moored for the night, near one of the ancient grottos curiously cut in the face of the crag, and early in the morning were ashore to explore them. Some of them are of very ancient date, and record the triumphs of the early Pharaohs over their Ethiopian enemies. But the most remarkable sight at Silsilis, is the sandstone quarries on both sides the river. From these alone, were the monuments of Egypt totally destroyed, we might have inferred their vast number and their colossal proportions. Their extent is perfectly amazing.

"The mountain," says Olin, "for an extent of several miles, is cut into yawning chasms and high threatening precipices, that, in their dimensions and variety of forms, mimic the sublime workmanship of nature. As the stone immediately on this bank of the river was porous, and less adapted to architectural purposes, passages were cut through these useless masses into the heart of the mountain. I did not measure these avenues, but am sure that several of them are nearly half a mile in length by fifty or sixty feet wide and eighty deep. Many large masses remain as they are left by the workmen, and all the processes of quarrying are plainly exhibited." These excavations form a perfect labyrinth, and are supposed by Dr. Olin to have given shelter to the persecuted Christians, from the crosses that are painted in different places. Some idea of the peculiarities of this remarkable spot, of its perforated grottos, decorated with the achievements of the ancient kings, its fantastic rocks, one of which, from its resemblance to a rude pillar, is supposed to have originated the idea of a chain being thrown across from it to the opposite side, together with the immense scale of the excavations on the eastern or Arabian side, may be formed from the annexed wood-cut. The whole scene is very impressive,

like the avenue of approach to some new region of wonders. Stemming the powerful current by the aid of our broad lateen sails and a strong northerly breeze, we opened another and wider region of the valley, adorned with clustering palm groves, and passing the temple of Ombos, another noble specimen of the later Egyptian architecture, flew swiftly on towards the cataracts. A sudden squall from the east brought us up in the midst of our rapid career, the sails were instantly let loose, which saved us from going down, and with great difficulty we made the shore, and tied our craft fast up to a group of mimosas. The river was one sheet of foam, the land almost obscured by a whirlwind of sand, which penetrated the deepest recesses of the palm grove where we sought a temporary refuge. Loosening again we soon came in sight of Assouan, the ancient Syene, the most picturesque spot, with the exception of Philæ, on the whole course of the Nile. The centre of the river, which is here of magnificent breadth and volume, is occupied by the green and beautiful island of Elephantine, which gave a title to an early dynasty of Egyptian kings On the right is a high sandy eminence crowned by the ruins of a convent; on the left the precipitous rock of Syene projects into the river, crowned with the ruins of a Saracenic fortress, while more distant hills of barren sand are dotted with tombs and ruins of the same period. There is no other place on the river to which we can so properly apply the term *romantic.*

Here then we are 700 miles above the sea, and at the frontier post of ancient Egypt itself, though, as it is hardly necessary to remind the reader, the dominion of the Pharaohs extended far to the southward, farther perhaps towards the unknown sources of the Nile than is usually supposed. Syene was garrisoned at a later period by the Persians and Romans. There are, however, few traces of that remote period now remaining, either at Assouan or Elephantine, the principal monuments being of the Saracenic period, coeval with the conquest of Egypt by Amer.

We laid our boat ashore by the side of the beautiful palm

grove that lines the bank of the river below the castle, and as the sun was setting, walked up to visit its hoary walls. I know not that I ever enjoyed myself more while upon the Nile. The scene from this rock is so singular, and so utterly unlike anything else upon its course, but the effect was proportionally grateful. The river rushed past in a succession of powerful whirls and eddies, which as they swept along glittered in the dying sunbeams. Set in the midst of the coil of the troubled waters, were various black-coloured fantastic islets, the outposts of the cataracts, and Elephantine with its verdant groves. It was delightful to lie down and listen to the sound of the rushing river as it swept under the hoary rock—a low and solemn monotone, to look up into the deepening glow of the crimsoned sky, to inhale an atmospheric softness which seemed to bathe the soul in luxury; and what with the wildness and strangeness of all around, the feeling of remoteness which cleaves to "far Syene," the historical associations connected with it—the old rock of Assouan was a place from which it was difficult to tear oneself away.

Arrived at the frontier of Egypt, and entering upon Nubia, we find not only a marked geographical division, but a different race of people. The Nubians are tall and slender in person—far less massive in build than the Theban Arabs. There is something of elegance in their general appearance, and the cast of their features is rather intellectual. They are of a soft dusky black or bronze tint, with a very fine skin, and they delight to oil their bodies, and to load their sable ringlets with unguents anything but odoriferous to the European nose. Their women have often elicited the rapturous remarks of travellers, in whose eyes they move about like so many sable Venuses, realizing the description of our mother Eve, as being when "unadorned, adorned the most," their sole costume, in this serene and glowing climate, being an apron round the middle, and somewhat of the slenderest too, composed of loose thongs of leather decorated with small shells. Thus attired, these dusky beauties come forth from

among overshadowing thickets of palm, bearing for sale elegant little baskets woven by them of corn stalks and pieces of bark; while the men produce a warlike array of shields of hippopotamus hide, slender lances, knotted clubs, and other little implements of destruction, which they are accustomed to make use of in settling their domestic feuds.

The beauty of these women has in truth been somewhat exaggerated, but with regard to the freedom with which it is exhibited, we may quote the remark of Bishop Heber in speaking of the women of India: "How entirely the idea of indelicacy, which would naturally belong to such figures as those now around us if they were white, is prevented by their being of a different colour to ourselves. So much are we children of association and habit, and so instinctively and immediately do our feelings adapt themselves to a total change of circumstances; it is the partial and the inconsistent only which affects us."

I was prevented by indisposition from visiting the different objects of interest at Syene, which are the quarries and Saracenic monuments. The former are highly interesting, containing an obelisk left on the spot whence it was chiselled. Wilkinson thinks that an attentive scrutiny of the Mohammedan remains might bring to light important evidence as to the antiquity of the pointed arch, of which, however, the oldest specimen is perhaps the mosque of Omar at Jerusalem. There is little else beside the romantic character of the place to detain the traveller at this old frontier town of Egypt, which has been of great importance as a military post, in connexion with Elephantine.

I have shown more compassion to the reader than some travellers, who devote a large portion of their pages to "chronicling" their petty squabbles and the annoyances that may have befallen them, but I cannot pass over wholly without notice the iniquity of my worthless Reis. I have already alluded to his infidel sensuality in the matter of the Ramadan;

FRONTIER OF ECYPT AND NUBIA.

he is devoted to dancing-girls and raki, and proves to be, like Dr. Olin's captain, with whom I really believe him to be identical, "an incompetent, stupid, and desperately lazy man." Our native agent at Keneh had already suggested the bastinado, and politely offered to see it applied; but I could not consent to deliver him to the tender mercies of the governor, and now the ungrateful, indolent villain flatly refused to take me across the river from Assouan to the opposite side, on some pretence of "rocks." This time I determined on trying the stimulus of a little Arab persuasion, and leaping on shore with my firman, hurried in wrath towards the governor's; but I had hardly gone a dozen paces, when the worthless fellow came running after me, embracing my knees, professing repentance, and promising reformation in the most abject manner.

He returned to the boat unscathed, and, with unwonted diligence, took an oar himself, and put his huge carcass into such a state of activity, that in very brief space, and in spite of the "rocks," we landed at the foot of the high sandy bluff, which I was desirous of ascending. About half way up are the ruins of a convent, and on the summit a small tomb or mosque, commanding this frontier scene of Egypt very completely. Here the desert, both on the Libyan and Arabian side, comes tumbling in wild heaps and billows of sand, tempest-wrought and sun-blanched into fantastic dreary shapes and hues, up to the bright blue river, which keeps on, like life in death, in ever glorious flow. Reposing on its bosom, the fertile Elephantine and one or two other large islands, contrast their bright green corn and tufted palms with the prevailing hue of the sand, the hoary ruins of the Saracenic castle of Assouan appear on its rock, and the heights beyond, among which lie the celebrated quarries, are dotted with a few ruined tombs and mosques, which add the melancholy of decayed monuments of man's works to the eternal barrenness of nature. This view gives an excellent though somewhat distant idea of the numerous craggy islets, of every form and size, through which the Nile pours the treasures

of its waters to fertilize the great valley of Egypt, extending hence seven hundred miles down to the Mediterranean.

On our way back we touched at the island of Elephantine, whose present appearance is very different from its ancient one, its site having been once occupied, like that of Philæ,* by sacred buildings, of which but a few fragments have escaped; the principal of them being a small granite gateway of the time of Alexander, on the southern part of the island, which is covered with mounds of ruin. The greater part of this delightful site is now overgrown with corn and interspersed with palm groves.

The rising Nile, it was thought, would enable us to float lightly over the rocks and shoals upon which boats often bump at low water; accordingly we made our arrangements for ascending the river. The "Captain of the Cataracts," as he is called, a Nubian from the village of Philæ, was sent for; it being his business (*cum privilegio*) to insure the safe passage of all boats passing and repassing them. A bargain was soon struck; and early in the morning he came on board with his men. His appearance at once inspired confidence in his capacity and resolution; he stood at the helm a tall, dignified ebony statue, in a long blue robe and white turban; his half-naked men he stationed in different parts of the boat, our own crew were to work the sails as ordered, and under such a leader they seemed inspired with a degree of alacrity very different from that 'laissez faire' indifference and invincible laziness which had hitherto been our daily torment. On one of the brightest of tropical mornings our broad sails were thrown out to the Etesian wind; we flew rapidly through the narrow strait between the castled crag of Assouan and Elephantine, and soon reached the outposts of that maze of rocky islets through which the noble river forces its tumultuous passage from Nubia into Egypt. All was now attention; as we entered the foaming currents, the quick eye of the master-pilot glanced from rock to rock, the man at the bows watched the turn of every eddy; quickly and dexter-

* Wilkinson.

ously our course was changed—at one moment, our huge sails, bellowing, straining with their utmost force through the boiling torrent, we seemed bearing down upon a pile of granite, against which our bark would have crashed like an egg-shell, when almost touching it the voice of the Nubian would be heard, loud and clear above the roar of the troubled waters, and a sudden shift of our canvass would bring us up on the edge of a sandy shoal—nervous work enough for a few minutes; till re-assured against peril by the calmness and dexterity of our pilot, we could feel enough at ease to enjoy the wild and exciting scene around, which assumed a new aspect with every turn of the helm. It would seem as though Osiris and Typhon, principles of life and death—of the fertile valley and the arid desert, seen ever side by side in this wonderful land, had met in fiercest conflict, and in the midst of the coil of the half-prisoned river, left traces of a doubtful struggle for the mastery. Here rises, sheer from the flood, a huge pile of black and frowning basalt, intermingled with rose-coloured syenite, and veined with white quartz; there in vivid contrast appears some green island, covered with tangled palms and scented acacias; or lovely little islets, bordered with a rim of the whitest and finest sand, sprinkled with mimosas, and resounding with the music of birds. Such is fair Sehayl, its fragrant groves and thickets reposing with an aspect so poetical, such an air of celestial peacefulness, in the midst of surrounding convulsion, we wonder not that it should have been held sacred, and placed under the special protection of the goddesses Saté and Anouké, the Grecian Juno and Vesta. The multitude of these obstructions, wildly thrown together, and of every size, from large islands to single rocks, scarce peeping above the roaring current at this season of the Nile's rise, taxed to the utmost the skill and attention of our pilot. To thread such a labyrinth without accident seemed impossible.

Fully to complete the strangeness of the picture should be added the feats and antics of the denizens of this extraordinary region, some of which, however, we did not happen to wit-

ness. "Our attention," says Olin, "was soon attracted to two Nubian boys, who pursued us in quest of backsheesh, by a species of navigation more simple and rude than our own. They had bound their scanty wardrobe in a bundle upon the top of their heads, and seated themselves astride a stick,—perhaps six inches in diameter, and five feet long, the forward end a little flattened to diminish the resistance of the water; they used their hands for paddles, and with this ticklish craft outsailed us, and ran across our track at pleasure. Sometimes they sat upright, extending their legs before them close to the log; they would lie on it at full length, one behind the other, still moving with undiminished velocity. I felt some concern for their adventure at first, but was soon relieved of my apprehension when I saw the admirable skill with which they retained their difficult position and guided their rolling bark. After amusing themselves and us for a considerable time, and receiving the backsheesh, they returned to the shore. These boys were hardly more than six years of age. Soon after we witnessed another specimen of the aquatic skill of this amphibious race:—half-a-dozen young men and well-grown boys, who were upon the beach near us, threw off their clothes, and, running at full speed over the rocks for more than a quarter of a mile, to a bluff overlooking the falls, plunged into the foaming torrent. They were borne along by the current with fearful velocity, tossed on high and buried, alternately, by its fury; they dashed away the waves nobly, raising their hands high out of the water at every stroke; the head was carried very low, with the face apparently in the water, to avoid the greater resistance by the breast. It was a wild and exciting spectacle."—On we still went, darting from one side to another as the eddies required, till we reached at length a point where the increasing roar of the river gave signs of serious impediment to our progress. Here our Nubians, leaping into the stream and gaining the overhanging rocks, with loud shouts began to haul up the boat; but the force of the waters was such that, in spite of our still straining

APPROACH TO PHILÆ.

sails, we could not breast its fury, but were evidently backing into a whirlpool edged with jagged rock splinters—an ominous predicament. It was now, at the decisive moment, that all but those required for the helm dashed into the flood, and with a long pull, and a strong pull, and a 'Heylessa'* chorus, increasing in vigour and desperation with the obstacle to be surmounted, we shot up the rapid into the quiet water above, and the rocks around echoed with the shouts and laughter of the naked and streaming Nubians, like so many animated statues formed out of the black basalt crags around. A calm and noble reach of the majestic river, shut in like a lake with its mountain border, soon opened on us through a portal of the last of those scattered piles of sombre rocks through which we had forced our noisy way; and in its midst an island slept, as it were, in enchantment—the sacred Philæ; its temples of mysterious sanctity half-hidden by sheltering groves of palm, and reflected far down into the broad, silent, and glassy river. Gliding across this tranquil bason, we furled our sails and laid the boat under the deep cool shadow of a high bank overhung with foliage; certainly the most beautiful spot in Egypt. A graceful columnar building, of the later style of Egyptian art, on a bold and massive foundation, looked down, from amidst clusters of palms, upon the water—one of those combinations rather like the creation of a painter's fancy than an actual scene.

The entire scenery from Assouan to Philæ is so utterly unlike the general character of the Nile, and so impressed with an almost unearthly wildness—fantastic and impish, as Miss Martineau well calls it—the frame-work in which is often set a beauty almost as unearthly, that no region could have been so well selected by the ancient Egyptians to invest with the most sacred scenes of their mythology. Philæ itself was a spot of peculiar sanctity, as one of the fabled burial-places of Osiris. "So holy was the place," says Wilkinson, "that no one was permitted to visit it without express permission; and it was fancied

* "God help us!"

that no bird would fly over, nor fish swim near this consecrated ground. "Osiris, in his mysterious character, was the greatest of the Egyptian deities, but little is known of those undivulged secrets which the ancients took so much care to conceal. So cautious indeed were the initiated, that they made a scruple even of mentioning him, and Herodotus, whenever he relates any thing concerning this deity, excuses himself from uttering his name. His principal office as an Egyptian deity was to judge the dead, and to rule over that kingdom where the souls of good men were admitted to eternal felicity. Seated on his throne, accompanied by Isis and Nephys, with the four genii of Amenti, who stand on a lotus growing from the waters in the centre of the divine abode, he receives an account of the actions of the deceased," which are weighed in the scales of truth. But it is in his mysterious character, as the manifestation of the Divinity on earth, as an impersonation of *his goodness*, that his peculiar sanctity appears to have consisted. "He appeared on earth to benefit mankind, and after having performed the duties he had come to fulfil, and falling a sacrifice to Typho, the evil principle, who was at length overcome by his influence, after his leaving the world he rose again to a new life, and became the judge of mankind in a future state. The dead also, after having passed their final ordeal and been absolved from sin, obtained in his name, which they then took, the blessings of eternal felicity. This very remarkable analogy to the office sustained by our Saviour, may induce some to think," says Wilkinson, "that the Egyptians, being aware of the promises of his coming, had anticipated the event, and introduced that mystery into their religious system." Whether this was the case, or whether these ideas rather arose spontaneously in the Egyptian mind, must remain uncertain, but the functions thus ascribed to Osiris may well explain the peculiar and distinguishing reverence in which his fabled burial-place was held.*

* See more fully on this subject Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, 2nd Series, vol. i.

PHARAOH'S BED

Island of Philæ

His sepulchre, says Diodorus, is revered by all the priests throughout Egypt, and three hundred and sixty cups are filled daily with milk by priests expressly appointed for this purpose, who, calling on the names of the gods, utter a solemn lamentation, wherefore the island can only be approached by the priests; and the most solemn oath taken by the inhabitants of the Thebaid, is to swear by Osiris who lies buried in Philæ.

Associated with Osiris was Isis; she attended upon him as judge of the dead, in which character she was regarded as the greatest of the Egyptian goddesses. Osiris, Isis, and their son, Horus, formed the triad worshipped at Philæ. Isis was said to be the protector of her brother, and his royal consort or sister. In this quality she answered in the regions of the dead to Proserpine, the wife of Pluto, among the Greeks. Isis was metaphorically considered to be the earth, or feminine part of nature, or matter, in reference to the creative action of Deity. Horus, answering to the Greek Apollo, was the avenger of his father, Osiris, after his being put to death by Typhon, whom he is represented as overcoming in the form of a snake. The same idea also existed in the Greek, Scandinavian, and Indian mythology, and, like the story of Osiris, may have been derived, as Wilkinson suggests, from Bible tradition, or from some common conception of oriental origin, to shadow forth the apparent struggle between the good and evil principles which has so often perplexed philosophy to explain.

Much, it must be confessed, of the beauty of the island vanishes when we set foot on it, from the circumstance that it has been covered with a town of mud-built dwellings at a later period, the ruins and foundations of which, dull and ugly, grievously disguise the natural surface, and render a peregrination both difficult and toilsome. In this respect how different from the green monastic isle of Innisfallen, perhaps the loveliest retreat that earth can furnish! Picking, with difficulty, our way through these obstructions, we reached the great temple of Isis, which

ranges along the whole of this side of the island, divided by a narrow and rapid channel, across which there is a ferry, from the rocky, neighbouring island of Bigge. Though the general style of the temple, its propylæa and courts, resemble the rest of Egyptian fanes, there is considerable irregularity in the form; and Wilkinson and others call attention to "the small dark rooms in the wall of the eastern Adytum, to which a staircase leads from near the front of that chamber. They have the appearance of being intended either for concealing the sacred treasures of the temple, or for some artifice connected with superstition, and perhaps with the punishment of those who offended the majesty of the priesthood."

No part of the temple of Philæ presents the colossal grandeur of the ruins of Thebes, it is rather an elegant specimen of the lighter Ptolemaic architecture, and therefore so much the better adapted to harmonize with the romantic scenery of the island. The specimens of capitals, composed of the leaves of the lotus and other plants, are peculiarly delicate, and the vivid preservation of the colours adds much to their beauty. It has been well observed, that Egyptian temples are more picturesque in ruin, a remark which applies particularly to a spot like Philæ.

The views from every part of the island are exquisitely beautiful, but none surpasses that obtained from the end of the ruined gallery, extending from the great propylon to the extreme point. This corridor, resting on the wall which surrounded the island, to protect it from the current, is a happy and graceful specimen of the lighter Egyptian architecture; the four sides of the capitals present the smiling features of Isis. Attached to its extremity is a small obelisk directly overlooking the river, of which a broad, dreamy, lake-like reach comes down from the south, bordered by high mountains, and fringed with a border of palm groves. Sweeping around the dark, fantastic, up-piled rocks of Bigge, the current breaks against this end of the island, and peeping over the perpendicular wall which breaks its force, we

VIEW FROM PHILŒ

look down directly into its rapid waters, as they hurry away on their impetuous course towards the cataracts.

We moored this evening at a small Nubian village opposite the island, among several other boats come down from Dongola. The shore was lively with curious groups, and as night advanced the tranquil basin and the faintly seen temples and rocks which surrounded it, were over-canopied by a sky of tropical brilliancy glittering with countless stars. It was the closing scene of our voyage up the Nile, and will be the last to fade from memory.

It was my intention to have confined my descriptions entirely to the limits of my own journey, which was originally to have extended to the second cataract. This was however prevented by illness, and thus, rather than omit to notice the great temple of Abusimbal, one of the most remarkable monuments of Egypt, I have availed myself of the kind permission of Mr. Catherwood to engrave a sketch of it, drawn by him upon the spot, which I shall illustrate by a few brief particulars taken from other writers. Philæ has ever been considered as the boundary of Egypt and Nubia, and the characteristics of the Nile valley above the sacred island are totally different from those below. Lofty granite mountains hem in the river on both sides, leaving but a narrow strip of cultivable soil, the sole resource of the industrious inhabitants, who sedulously protect it by embankments, and heighten its fertility by the most careful irrigation, and thus the palm groves which line the shore, and relieve the sternness of the scenery, are noted for the superior quality of their fruit. Yet their comparative poverty compels many of the Nubians to seek employment in Lower Egypt. Like all mountaineers, they have a singular regard for their native fastnesses, and until lately have ever been jealous of the visits of travellers, whose early visits were not made without considerable personal risk. To Burckhardt, the enterprising discoverer of Petra, we are indebted also for the first notices of

Abusimbal; and in 1817, at the desire of Mr. Salt, then English consul at Cairo, Belzoni, with Captains Irby and Mangles, and Mr. Beechy, visited them with the view of removing the sand from the entrance of the great temple, which object, after much labour, they at length succeeded in accomplishing, while Mr. Hay completed the good work by clearing the doorway entirely to its base.

There are several temples between Philæ and Abusimbal, of more or less interest from their sculptural records, but that of Kalabshe is the only one that challenges attention by its architectural beauty. It is a graceful structure of the later period of Egyptian art, being built in the reign of Augustus, and finished by his successors. Its sculptures also are very fine.

The façade of the great temple at Abusimbal is smoothed perpendicularly in the face of the rock overlooking the Nile. It is 120 feet in length and about 90 in height, surrounded with a moulding, and adorned with a cornice and frieze. Attached to this façade are several stupendous colossal statues of Rameses II. They are represented as seated on thrones, including which, their total height may be between 60 and 70 feet. This vastness of scale alone is calculated to produce an effect of sublimity, and in addition, it is admitted by almost every traveller, that the heads of these colossal statues are the most beautiful in Egypt. Others less partial to the peculiarities of Egyptian art, or contrasting it with the nobler style of the Grecian, declare "that you can stand within the presence of their mightiest works of art without a particle of awe." There is nothing of the intellectual dignity of the Phidias of Jupiter in these acknowledged *chef d' œuvres* of Egyptian sculpture. The countenance has the same heavy form, and thick lips, that uniformly characterizes the rest of their creations. But, *of its kind*, it certainly is perfection itself. There is a benevolent tranquillity, a certain godlike serenity and superhuman gentleness, thrown over these massively moulded features, in which, as Denon remarked of the Sphynx, there is something of a

ABU - SIMBAL.

negro cast, a cross, as it were, of the African with the Asiatic blood. Of these gigantic statues there were originally four, but the third from the north, having been shattered by a rocky avalanche descending from the mountain above, has now a large portion of his head in his lap. Between the legs, and on either side of the colossi, are female figures of the natural size.

The whole face of the temple, as high as to the very heads of the statues, had been, as it is supposed for a period of many centuries, covered up with an enormous mass of sand, which, blown from the desert in the rear of the rocks, had gradually accumulated so as to form a mountain sloping gradually downwards for two or three hundred yards towards the banks of the Nile. The entrance was, at the period of Irby and Mangles' travels, entirely concealed. On arriving at Abusimbal they mustered a tolerably strong force, and were well armed; to which circumstance, as well as to their conduct and resolution, they owed their safety during the stormy scenes that ensued. Their first step was to propitiate the local chiefs with their presents; one of these, however, being disappointed that his own was of less value than that of his brother, henceforth threw every possible difficulty in their way. Fifty men were hired by day labour to work at the removal of the sand, but they wrought so slowly, that it was necessary to conclude a bargain with them to "open the temple" for a stipulated sum. Having, however, obtained one half of the money in advance, they soon after refused to proceed, and the enterprising explorers were reduced to undertake the work themselves. This, to the astonishment of the natives, they persisted in, not without being interrupted and threatened in a variety of ways, until at length their workmen were induced to resume their share of the exhausting labours. After labouring for a fortnight, eight hours in the day, under an average heat of from 112 to 116 Fahr., they had dug down to the top of the entrance doorway, when their mutinous crew endeavoured to compel their departure.

The whole body, armed with long sticks, pikes, swords, daggers, and pistols, presented themselves, declaring that they had waited till the last moment and must now go down the river, joining at the same time in savage imprecations, and scraping the sand in a menacing manner with their swords and hatchets. To this intimidating behaviour the travellers opposed an attitude of calm and resolute remonstrance. Whilst the dispute was going on, their janissary had contrived to squeeze himself through an aperture, and to enter the temple, upon which the crew, finding it their best policy to be conciliatory, agreed to remain and assist to clear the doorway. A rough wall was built up on either side to catch the descending sand, and the persevering adventurers were enabled to explore the temple. The smallness of the orifice admitted so little air, that the closeness was almost insupportable. Through the dim, dusky light thus opened after an interval of centuries, the first glimpse into the interior amply repaid them for their long-continued toil. They found themselves in a vast hall, adorned on either side with an imposing range of massive square pillars, each with a gigantic statue 17 feet in height attached to it in front, bearing the same serene and noble expression as the exterior colossi. Through the obscurity they could perceive that the walls of this noble excavation were covered with elaborate bas-reliefs of battle scenes similar to those that adorn the walls of Karnak. To this principal chamber succeeded a second hall of four square pillars, and the sanctuary, having an altar and statues, and two lateral apartments. Eight smaller and more irregular ones, opening from the sides of the Great Hall, completed this immense and magnificent excavated temple, extending 200 feet from the entrance. Besides this, there is another nearer to the river, the depth of which is about 90 feet.

Not far above Abusimbal is Wadee Halfeh, and the second cataract of the Nile. A lofty cliff rising above them commands a striking view over the innumerable rocky islets which break up the current of the river into a series of rapids, which extend

for several miles. The second cataract is about 950 miles above the Rosetta mouth of the Nile.

With the great rock temples of Abusimbal terminate the most remarkable of the monuments on the Nile. But, before closing, let us glance at those scattered at intervals upward towards the yet unexplored sources of the river. To Nubia, with its narrow rock-girt valley, succeeds Ethiopia, which once gave a dynasty of kings to Egypt; its ancient capital of Napata was near Djebel Barkal, where there are numerous pyramids. Passing the Batronda desert, we reach the island of Meroë, an alluvial tract enclosed between two branches of the river, where the rich soil and important position led to the establishment of a commercial community, who have left behind them a considerable number of pyramids and temples. For these, far inferior in size and construction to those of Egypt, some had claimed an antiquity still greater than that of the latter, arguing therefrom the descent of civilization from Ethiopia and Meroë downwards towards the Thebaid and the Delta. It has been, however, recently ascertained by many, that the date of these structures is comparatively quite modern, and that they are but copies from those of Egypt. Here we finally lose sight of all monumental traces of the occupation or influence of the Pharaohs; though from the figures of captives on the sculptures we have reason to believe, that their prowess was not unfelt by the Arab and Negroid races, occupying the upper regions of the valley of the Nile.

The sources of the great river seem to recede farther into the heart of Africa as the enterprising explorer continues to advance in quest of them—far beyond the point on the Blue Nile, reached by Bruce. The White Nile has been recently explored as far as to Lat. 4° North by Werne, who found the papyrus, so long lost to Egypt, among the indigenous plants of the country. Lofty summits capped with snow, in Lat. 4° South, have been seen from a distance, by travellers from the eastern coast,—the probable reservoirs of the different head-waters of

the Nile. To this mountain range attention is now turned with intense earnestness,—and though for a while baffled by local difficulties, there can be little doubt that some fortunate explorer will, ere long, succeed in penetrating its fastnesses, and of standing, with feelings that a monarch might envy him, over the long-hidden sources of the venerable patriarch of rivers.

FINIS

JOHN CHILDS AND SON, BUNGAY.

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